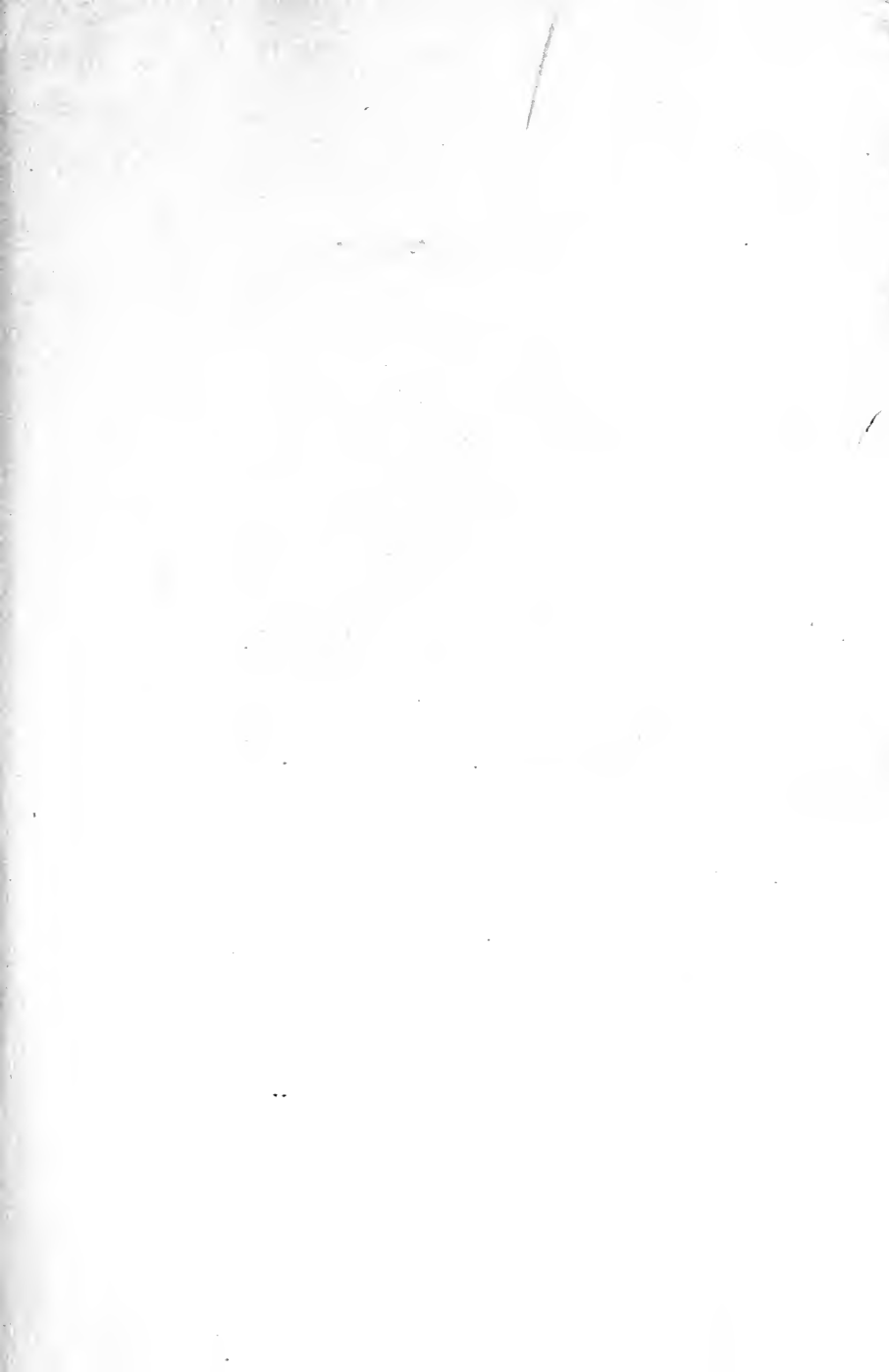


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FAIRY GOLD

POEMS

BY

KATHARINE LEE BATES



NEW YORK

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To
KATHARINE KEITH
AND TO ALL THE
KATHARINES
WHO DO ME THE HONOR
TO BEAR MY NAME

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THE
COLUMBIA

Fairy Gold: A Play



Fairy Gold

A PLAY IN THREE SCENES

The Players, in Order of Entrance:

LEPRECAUN, the Fairy Shoemaker

The Pansy Fairies:

TWINKLE, a Saucy Fairy in a Yellow Hat

SPECKLE, a Kindly Fairy in a Hat of
Many Colors

SKYPEEP, a Very Polite Fairy in a Blue
Hat

WEEWEE, the Smallest Fairy in a White
Hat trimmed with Brown

DUSKY, a Queen Fairy in a Purple Hat

JACK-A-DREAMS

LADY LEPRECAUN

ZAN-IN-A-TIPPET

SCENE I

[If the play is acted out of doors, a lawn with bushes of blossoming forsythia would make the best of springtime settings. For later summer, a meadow of goldenrod or indigo weed would answer, or, where gorse grows, the gorse. If the play is indoors, and the florist has no yellow blossoming plants to give away, home artists can fashion flowers yet unknown to botany from green pasteboard and yellow paper. In the thick of the golden bloom is a rough brown stump of considerable size. On this is seated, cross-legged, an elf who looks, at first glance, like a twisted outgrowth of the stump. He is dressed in brown from top to toe, except for the magic red cap with the white owl-feather which is the regular head-gear of fairymen. He wears a brown leather apron. A pile of nine silvery slippers lies on

the stump beside him, and he is pounding, with steady strokes, on a tenth, chanting dolefully in time to the blows of his small hammer. (A bit of metal, concealed inside the slipper, will make the hammer-strokes ring.) A group of five bare-footed pansy fairies, each dressed in close-fitting green with a very broad hat of one pansy hue or another, wait about the stump with soft, fluttering motions, so full of frolic that they cannot stand still.]

LEPRECAUN:

Alack!

Tick-tack!

Tack-tick!

TWINKLE:

Be quick.

Don't croak

And stop

For groans,

You slow
Old poke.

SPECKLE:

Tut, tut !

LEPRECAUN [*Rubbing himself all over*]:

Oh, oh!
Tick-tack !
Tack-tick !
I am
One ache
From top
To toe.
My back
Will break.
Oh, *what*
A crick !

TWINKLE:

Don't nurse

--

Your dry
Old bones.
Be spry
And make
Your ham-
Mer click.
Don't shirk.
Just keep
At work.
Our purse
Is deep.

SPECKLE:

I fear
He's in
A dump.

LEPRECAUN:

Why not?

My lot
Is drear.

TWINKLE [*Mockingly*]:
Hear, hear !

LEPRECAUN [*Angrily*]:
You know
'Tis so,—
That year
By year,
Upon
This queer
Old stump,
I mend
Your shoes
From dews
Of dawn
Till dews
Of eve.

--

Alack !

Tick-tack .

SKYPEEP:

Good friend,

Receive

Our thanks.

You win

Our love.

Great pains

You take,

All for

Our sake.

TWINKLE:

O pshaw !

His gains

He'll make

In gold.

Huge store

Thereof
He hoards
In se-
Cret banks.

WEEWEE:

Does he ?
Let's look
For them
By hill
And brook
And wil-
Low stem.

LEPRECAUN [*Shaking his head almost off his
shoulders*]:

No, no !
Not so !
No more
Bright gold

..

This earth
Affords
For me
Than grows
On shrub.

TWINKLE:

Oh, rub
Your knee !

LEPRECAUN [*Threatening Twinkle with his
hammer and then throwing it
down*]:

The scamp !
He knows
How hard
I work
In heat
And damp
And cold.

TWINKLE:

A cross-
Legged Turk,
You guard
Your gold.

DUSKY [*Speaking to Twinkle as severely as a
fairy can*]:

Tush, tush !
Enough !
Now hush !
You mar
Our mirth.
You jar
Our joy.
You are
Too rough
And bold.

[*To the Leprecaun.*]

We blush

For this
Annoy
And would
Entreat
Your speed,
Kind sir.
Forget
All ill,
For still
Our feet
Go bare.

LEPRECAUN [*Folding his arms tighter than
tight*]:

Indeed !
Why should
I care?
Why should
I stir?
I'll take

My ease.

A Turk !

WEEWEE:

You'll make

Us cry.

LEPRECAUN [*Coldly*]:

Will I ?

SPECKLE:

Oh, please !

LEPRECAUN [*Glancing down at his hammer*]:

Not yet.

SKYPEEP:

I'll throw

A kiss.

[*So she does, but Twinkle jumps up
and catches it.*]

TWINKLE:

Oho !

You miss
Your aim.

SPECKLE:

For shame !

*[All the other fairies point reproach-
fully at Twinkle.]*

SKYPEEP:

O fie !
Don't tell.

WEEWEE:

You could
Be good,
As well
As I.

DUSKY *[To Twinkle in a calm but awful
voice]:*

We'll shut
You up

In a-
Corn cell,
Or cut
You up
Yourself
For gold
And pay
Him well.

LEPRECAUN [*Picking up his hammer*]:

Hurray !

Good pay.

*[All the other fairies set upon Twinkle,
opening and shutting their fingers
like scissors.]*

TWINKLE [*Running about in a fright*]:

Away !

Help all !

I'll call

The elf

Police.

[*To Dusky.*]

Oh, cease

To scold.

I'm good

As gold.

DUSKY:

Just hold

That mood.

LEPRECAUN [*Hammering with might and
main*]:

Tick-tack !

Tack-tick !

My knack

Is quick.

'Tis now

My whim

To show
My skill.

SKYPEEP:

Let's bow
To him.

*[The fairies make a great many bows,
faster and faster and deeper and
deeper, till Weewee topples over,
while the Leprecaun, tossing the
mended slipper to Skypeep, falls
to work on another.]*

SKYPEEP *[Offering her slipper politely, but
very rapidly, to each fairy in
turn.]:*

[To Dusky]:

Will you
Take it?
Not so?

[*To Weewee*]:

Oh, you
It will
Not fit
At all,
I know.

[*To Speckle*]:

My shoe
Were small
For you,

[*To Twinkle*]:

And you.
Oh, oh !

[Twinkle has snatched the slipper, but as all the fairies begin to chase him, again opening and shutting their fingers like scissors, he flings it back to Skypeep, who puts it on and hops joyously about on one foot.]

DUSKY:

Pansies wear,
Pansies wear
Purples woven
Out of air,
Out of air,
Dew and sun;
Purple pansies;
I am one.

Pansies wear
Overnight
Slippers made of
Silver light;
Silver shoon
Softly spun
Out of moonshine;
Give me one.

*[The Leprecaun drops a slipper to
Dusky and hammers away on*

another. Dusky takes Skypeep's hands and, each on one foot, they skip about together.]

TWINKLE [*Mocking Dusky's song*]:

Pansies wear—
—Look at me !—
Gleamy yellows,
Good to see,
Good to see
In the sun;
Merry fellows;
I am one.

Cobbler sits,
Cobbler sits
Hammering with
All his wits,
All his wits,
Just for fun,

Mending slippers.

Give me one.

[The Leprecaun shies a slipper at the head of Twinkle, who dodges and catches it. Putting it on, he takes hands with Dusky and Skypeep and they hop about in a circle.]

SPECKLE *[Leading Weewee up to the stump]:*

Pansies wear,
I have heard,
Like to flower,
Moth and bird,
What they have,
Stripe or freckle.

WEEWEE:

Slippers, please,
For me and Speckle.

[The Leprecaun hands down a slipper

to Speckle, which she fits on the foot of Weewee, who goes skipping in the circle with the rest. The Leprecaun hammers harder than ever, while Speckle stands waiting.]

LEPRECAUN [*Growing more cheerful as he gets on with his task*]:

Tick-tack !

Tack-tick !

No thorn

Shall prick

Your feet

So light.

[Gives a slipper to Speckle, who joins the fairy ring, while the Leprecaun mends the rest of the slippers, one after another, at an amazing rate of speed.]

No elf,

No flower,
Shall lack
To-night
Soft shoon
As bright
As our
Own moon,
As her
White fire.
Though torn,
Perchance,
By burr
Or brier,
Though worn
By danc-
Ing step
Upon
The lawn,
Across
The moss,

Myself,
Myself,
The Lep-
Recaun,
With patch
On patch
Will make
Them neat
For fair-
Y feet.

So take ! [*Tosses a slipper to Dusky.*]

So catch ! [*Throws another to Speckle.*]

Your share ! [*Flings another to Skypeep.*]

Your match ! [*Pitches another to Weewee.*]

My birds !

But who

Deride

My skill [*Points angrily at Twinkle.*]

May rue

Their words

And wait.

TWINKLE:

*[Clambers up on the stump and sits
close beside the Leprecaun, holding
the last slipper under the hammer.
The other fairies, now able to use
both feet, join hands and dance
about the stump.]*

No fear !

I will

Abide

Right here,

Old mate.

LEPRECAUN *[Relenting]*:

What, what !

Hum, hum !

Oho !

You'll sit

By me
And try
To coax
Me so
With aid?
A hoax !

TWINKLE:

No, no,
I'm not
So bad,
Old lad,
—Don't hit
My thumb!—
But I
Am made
Of jokes
And glee,
Not glum
Like some

Old folks

I know.

LEPRECAUN [*In high good humor*]:

Tick-tack !

Tack-tick!

My back

May ache,

But fays

Must trip

In sil-

Ver shoon

When moon-

Shine plays.

So take

Your pick.

[*Laughingly fits the one slipper left on
Twinkle's uptilted foot.*]

TWINKLE:

I will,

Thankee.

Now skip

With me.

[Twinkle pulls the stiff old elf up with him and they dance together on the stump, while the other fairies circle about them and sing.]

FAIRIES:

Who's the fairy milliner?

Don't you wish you knew?

Would you buy your hats of her?

Wouldn't you?

Underneath the Sunset Tree,

Where the bright leaves drop,

She is busy in her wee

Pansy shop.

Every leaf her shears cut out

Into scallops five,

—Shears that buzz like bees about

Honey-hive;

For a million hats they frame,
Funny, curly shears,
But the fashions are the same
All the years.

LEPRECAUN [*Pushing Twinkle to the edge of
the stump*]:

You bump
Me, boy.
Begone !

TWINKLE [*Springing down*]:

I jump.
Enjoy
Your stump
Alone.

[*The Leprecaun whirls around and
around on the stump, his leather
apron flapping out in front of him
and his owl-feather cap trying to*

*fly, while the fairies laugh and clap.
Soon he sinks down, tired out, and
waves them all away.]*

LEPRECAUN:

So, so!
Be pleased
To go.
I can
No more
Be teased
By you.
I'm sore
All through.
The earth's
Not all
A pan-
Sy bed.

TWINKLE:

Buz-buz !

Who said

It was?

LEPRECAUN:

Your worth's

But small

Beside

The rose.

DUSKY:

Who knows?

LEPRECAUN:

A score

Of flowers

Will soon

Be here

With shoes

All torn

By burr

And thorn.
Before
They call,
I need
Repose.

SPECKLE:

Poor dear!
He's wan
And hol-
Low-eyed.

SKYBLUE:

We're gone.
Don't chide.

DUSKY:

The moon
Is due
In few

Swift hours.

O pan-

Sies, flit.

We can

Not lose

One gleam

Of her.

WEEWEE:

No, no.

Not one

Bright beam

Of her.

*[As the fairies are dancing away,
Leprecaun begins to hem and haw.]*

LEPRECAUN:

Yet stay !

Yet hold !

My pay !

My bill !

TWINKLE:

Oho !

That's it.

A dun !

Old gold-

Bug still !

*[The fairies skurry hither and yon
over the field. Each finds something
bright and yellow and tosses it into
Leprecaun's leather apron.]*

LEPRECAUN:

What gain?

What make

I by

My wit

Of hand?

A flake

Of i-

Singlass !

Some yel-
Low sand!
All vain.
A bit
Of horn !
A grain
Of corn !
Alas!
But here
—Take cheer,
My eyes !—
Here, here
Is gold.
All's well.
Gold, gold !
O dear
Delight !
I'll hold
It tight.

[He hugs a big gilt button.]

FAIRIES:

The wind's far whistle

Calls every fay.

Down of the thistle.

Away!

In your lap of leather

Our gold we throw.

Flight of a feather.

We go.

LEPRECAUN [*Watching the little pansy people
as, still singing, they dance out
of sight*]:

Ay, ay!

Flit fast.

Keep step.

Goodbye.

They're gone.

The Lep-

Recaun

At last
Can yawn.

[*Yawns prodigiously.*]

Dance on
To your
Moon ball.

[*Murmurs drowsily.*]

Alack!
I'm sure
By dawn
You'll all
Be back.

[*The Leprecaun, still clutching his gilt
button, curls himself up on the
stump and falls fast asleep.*]

SCENE II

[As before, the Leprecaun still sound asleep on his stump. Enter Jack-a-Dreams, all in tatters, except for his red necktie, with an empty sack and a shovel on his shoulder.]

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks
Crammed with gleaming gold!
Still I search and still Zan mocks,
But she will not scold
When I find the elfin treasure,
Fill my sack and scamper home
With more gold than man can measure,
Yellow as the sunlit foam.

[The Leprecaun stirs and begins to uncurl.]

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks
Buried years ago
Deep beneath the lichened rocks
By the Leprecaun.
Zan, whose tongue so often chides me,
Will forgive my thriftless ways
When a shower of gold-dust hides me,
Like the sun in dazzling haze.

*[The Leprecaun stretches his short arms
and legs in a long yawn.]*

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!
I will stuff with gold
All her teapots, all her socks.
Then she will not scold.
I will take her old gray tippet,
Gnawed o' nights by hungry mice,
And in molten gold I'll dip it
Till it shines like Paradise.

[The Leprecaun sits upright on the stump with crossed legs, rubs his eyes and begins to chuckle. His back is turned to Jack-a-Dreams, whose presence he has not noticed.]

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!

I will—zooks! what's that?

[Jack catches sight of the fairy shoemaker and, jumping back in great surprise and excitement, drops his shovel, which falls noiselessly on the grass.]

'Tis the Leprecaun who locks
Up his gold.

LEPRECAUN: Tit-tat!

[The Leprecaun raps softly with his hammer on one side of the stump. A

*door opens and out peeps the elfin
face, looking much like a walnut, of
Lady Leprecaun.]*

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Bless my eyes, 'tis his old mother,
But without a pipe, like mine
Drowsing in the peat-smoke smother—
How I'll dress her up!

LADY LEPRECAUN [*Whose voice is no more
than a squeak*]:

Wilt dine,
My son?
A roast-
Ed snail
Is set
Upon
The mush-
Room plate
For thee.

LEPRECAUN:

Not yet.

I'll wait

Till tea.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Tush, tush!

Thou'rt pale.

Not well,

My pet?

A toast-

Ed mel-

On seed

Might whet

Thine ap-

Petite.

LEPRECAUN:

Mayhap

It might

To-night;

But now
I need
Thee, mam,
To sew
For me.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Then thou
Hast got
One but-
Ton more
In store?

LEPRECAUN:

Just see
This toy!

*[Triumphantly displaying the big gilt
button.]*

LADY LEPRECAUN *[Her walnut-head wagging
with eagerness]:*

What, what?

Oh, oh!
My clev-
Er lamb!
My love-
Ly toad !
I'll sew
Apace
For thee,
My val-
Iant dove!
My grace-
Ful bum-
Ble-bee !
Was ev-
Er boy
Like him !
I'll sew
The but-
Ton strong,
And make

Him fit
For court,
So fine
He shall
Outshine
Them all
In fair-
Y hall.

LEPRECAUN [*Lying flat across the stump and
reaching down both arms to
help her*]:

Then come
Along,
And quit
Our dim
Abode,
Our low-
Ly fort.
Here! take
My hand,

So—so,
And climb
The brier-
Built stair
Above,

[Lady Leprecaun, all in brown like her son, is very stiff with her great age and has much difficulty in scrambling up.]

For I'm
On fire
To wear
My grand
New coat.

[He whisks out from a closet in the stump a jacket of scarlet silk, set with seven rows of gilt buttons. Each row but one has seven buttons; the unfinished row has only six.]

LADY LEPRECAUN [*Panting from her exertions*]:

Puff, puff!

Huh, huh!

Ump, ump!

O son,

I do

Not doat

Upon

Thy rough

Old stump.

[*He pats her affectionately and places her on a moss cushion with her back to his.*]

LEPRECAUN:

Now sit

Thou here

And take

Support

From my
Firm back.

[As Lady Leprecaun sits sewing with her shoulders braced against those of her son, who is nearly asleep again, she faces Jack, staring open-mouthed, but, intent on her work, does not see him. While she stitches, she pipes in that shrill voice of hers the fairy sewing-song.]

LADY LEPRECAUN:

When a fairy
Has torn her gown
She need not carry
Pennies to town.

If a needle
Is her desire,
She can wheedle
A thorn from the brier.

She can provide her
Floss white as milk,
Coaxing the spider
For cobweb silk.

Birds prick cherries,
But never an elf
Mid thimble-berries
Need prick herself.

The field's a city
Whose shops are free—

*[Lady Leprecaun suddenly glances up
and sees the mortal in front of her.]*

JACK-A-DREAMS *[Mocking her piping tones]:*
Finish your ditty
And don't mind me.

*[Both fairies vanish in a twinkling
within the stump, but Jack rushes
up just in time to snatch the red cap
with the owl-feather from the dis-*

*appearing head of the Leprecaun.
Jack dances about, flourishing his
prize.]*

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks !

I need no longer hunt.

I hold your magic cap, old fox.

Give me gold.

LEPRECAUN *[Popping into view for an instant
over the further edge of the
stump.]*

I won't.

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Ha! I hold your white owl-feather,

By whose virtue elves enchant.

Cobbler, let us trade together,—

Give me just one crock.

LADY LEPRECAUN *[Popping up exactly as her
son had done]:*

He shan't.

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Eight-and-ninety treasure-crocks

Left when I am done.

Elf, appear! Your master knocks.

*[Jack sets the red cap on top of his head
and raps three times on the stump.]*

Only one.

LEPRECAUN *[Popping up as before, but with a
doleful face and the voice of a cry-
ing child]:*

Not one.

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Amethysts to you and rubies

Are like berries on the moor,

Don't be stingy to us——

LADY LEPRECAUN *[Popping up in a fury]:*

Boobies.

We're the poorest of the poor.

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!

Fairy, how you fib!

Really, such behavior shocks

Boobies. You're too glib.

Would you call my Zan-in-a-Tippet

Naughty names? Look out for her,

You bad-tempered little skipper,

Prickly as a chestnut burr.

*[From within the stump is heard the
wailing of the Leprecaun and the
angry squeaks of his mother.]*

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!

Cobbler, you have fussed

Long enough. Your master knocks.

*[Jack raps seven times, each rap louder
than the one before, on the stump.
At the seventh rap, out comes the*

*Leprecaun, his face twisted with
crying.]*

Give me gold.

LEPRECAUN:

I must. [*In a screech of despair.*]

JACK-A-DREAMS

You shall have your cap and feather
For one crock of gold. We'll fill
This my sack like friends together.
Will you play me fair?

LADY LEPRECAUN [*From within the stump*]:

He will.

JACK-A-DREAMS:

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!

Whoop!—I told her so.—

Barnyard roosters, weathercocks,

Help the dreamer crow.

[*Cockadoodles resound from far and
near.*]

Show me where the gold you bury,
Michael Mole.—Zan's foolish doubts!—
Hey-down-hey-down-hey-down-derry!
Come, be nimble, Peter Pouts.

*[Very sulkily the Leprecaun clambers
down the stump and slowly leads the
way across the field to one of the
yellow-blossoming shrubs, where he
stops and points earthward.]*

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks
Crammed with gleaming gold!
We'll no more be laughing-stocks.
Zan no more will scold.

*[Jack picks up his shovel and weighs it
in his hands.]*

Whew, but it's a heavy shovel!
Digging hard my hands would hurt,
And I never liked to grovel
In the unbecoming dirt.

Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks!

Ha, 'tis Zan shall dig.

She's as strong as any ox,

And her hands are big.

But I must be keen and canny

And beware of fairy trap.

See me mark the spot, my manny.

[Jack pulls off his red necktie and fastens it in a bowknot about the stem of the shrub.]

There's my fortune.—Catch your cap.

[Jack tosses the cap to the Leprecaun, who seizes it eagerly and races back to the stump, holding the cap down over his ears with both hands. Jack drops sack and shovel on the ground, and walks off whistling cheerily, his hands in his pockets.]

SCENE III

[As before. The Leprecaun sits hunched up on the stump, his elbows on his knees, and his chin in his hands. Lady Leprecaun, a bent, witchlike little figure, stands beside him, leaning on a fairy-horn.]

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Come, come,
My pet!
So glum?
Don't fret.
Be bold
Of cheer,
My clam,
And hug
Your dear

Old mam.
We need
Not cry
Until
We're hurt,
And still
The gold,
Bright seed
Well sown,
Is here
Beneath
Yon red
Cravat.
(The ugly
thing!
I would
That it
Were in
My teeth.)
We will

Outwit
The boo-
By yet
And win
Our own.

LEPRECAUN [*Gloomily*]:

But who
Has prom-
Ised that
I should
Play fair?

.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

My bat,
And so
Thou shalt.
Go free
From fault.
Trust all

To me,
For I,
Sweet bird,
My crow,
Am bound
By no
Such word.

LEPRECAUN [*Doubtfully*]:

But thou
Art old.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Thou'rt pert,
And not
Too young
Thyself.
But hold
Thy tongue,
Thou squat-

Ly elf.
Hark now!
I will
With sil-
Ver sound
Draw in
Our kin
From all
Around.
I call.

[Lady Leprecaun lifts the fairy-horn and blows it thrice. Fairies, the Pansies among them, run in from every side. The fairymen are clad in close-fitting grass-green suits, topped by red caps like fire-flies. The fairywomen are dressed in all gay colors and look like a runaway flower-garden.]

FAIRIES [*Singing as they gather about the stump*]:

We are the hid-folk,
Under-the-leaf folk,
Beautiful, brief folk,
 Glancing and gone.
We are the mid-folk,
Nor angel nor earth-folk,
Glistening mirth-folk,
 Dew of the dawn.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Fairies, fairies, fairies,
Will ye serve our need?

FAIRIES [*Standing at attention before her*]:

Tell us, tell us where is
Our task, that we may speed.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Fairies, hither mortals
Come to do us scorn.

FAIRIES:

Shall we strew their portals
With thistle and with thorn?

LADY LEPRECAUN:

A booby craves our yellow
Gold to make him rich.

FAIRIES:

Shall we fling the fellow
Into muddy ditch?

LADY LEPRECAUN:

You may hide his shovel
And tear to bits his bag.

DUSKY [*While the rest of the fairies gleefully
run toward the spade and sack*]:

Have we your approval

To remove that rag?

[She points toward the red necktie.]

LEPRECAUN:

No, old mother-honey.

That isn't playing fair.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

I'll reason with my sonny,

The while you tug and tear.

[The fairies shred the sack into little pieces, which they tuck out of sight in the grass. It takes a score of them to carry off the shovel, on which Twinkle steals a ride, and thrust it under the bushes.]

FAIRIES *[Singing as they work]:*

We are the whim-folk,

Butterfly-mood folk,

Myriad-hued folk,
Mocking mankind;
Dazzle-and-dim folk,
Baffle-and-tease folk,
Do-as-we-please folk,
Hide-what-we-find.

[Meanwhile the Leprecauns, with much shaking of heads and stiff but violent gestures, have been engaged in heated debate. Soon Lady Leprecaun blows her silver horn, and the fairies re-assemble before the stump.]

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Fairies, you were zealous.
Thanks and thanks to you.

FAIRIES:

Tell us, tell us, tell us
More that we may do.

LEPRECAUN:

You are not to meddle
With that scarlet tie.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

But where mortals peddle,
And where mortals buy,
You'll find many another.
Filch them one by one.

LEPRECAUN:

Why, my wizened mother?

LADY LEPRECAUN:

And why not, my son?

DUSKY:

At the fair out yonder?

TWINKLE:

And where gypsies bide?

LADY LEPRECAUN:

Wander, wander, wander,
For the world is wide.

FAIRIES [*Singing as they dance away in all
directions*]:

We are the dream-folk,
Dancing-by-moon folk,
Silvery-shoon folk,
Whirling in rings;
Stealing-the-cream-folk,
Raiding-the-shelf folk,
Mischievous elf-folk,
Burglars on wings.

[*The fairies are hardly gone before
they are back again, each proudly
waving a red necktie.*]

DUSKY:

The tinker, the tinker
—What fun was that!—
Busy about his
Tinkering sat.
Softly the tinker
Was brushed by a gnat,
And ho! he's without his
Red cravat.

SPECKLE:

The fisher, the fisher
Dipped his oar
To bring his wherry
Back to the shore.
Wave splashed the fisher;
He'll long deplore
Tie red as cherry
That once he wore.

WEEWEE:

The peddler, the peddler
Slept in the sun
And dreamed his bundle
Started to run.
Wheelbarrow peddler
Awoke with one
Less necktie to trundle.
—Oh, that was fun!—

SKYPEEP:

The lover, the lover
Sped through the rye,
Where bees were humming,
His luck to try.
Bee stung the lover;
Lass said *Fie!*
To see him coming
Without a tie.

TWINKLE [*So wound about with red cravats
that he looks like the Prince of the
Poppies*]:

The raven, the raven
From the shopman's line
Stole—bad manners!—
Ties red as wine.
A straw for the raven!
Nest in the pine
Misses its banners.
—What fun was mine!—

[*And still fairies come leaping and
laughing in with more and more red
neckties, which they flourish as they
dance about the stump.*]

LADY LEPRECAUN [*Who has blown her silver
horn for silence*]:

I call.
The hour

Is near.
Hush, all
Who are
Our friends,
And hear
My strat-
Agem.
Elves, I
Beseech
You, tie
On each
Tall stem
That dips
And bends
With flower
Of gold,
Those scar-
Let strips
Ye hold.
Work fast.

LEPRECAUN [*Rocking with laughter until he
has to hold his sides*]:

Ho, ho!

I spy

What thou

Art at.

LADY LEPRECAUN:

At last,

My bat?

FAIRIES [*Suiting action to word*]:

We bow.

We go.

We tie.

[*Enter Jack-a-Dreams and Zan-in-a-Tippet, who is a worried-looking woman with a gray worsted scarf, old and worn, about her neck. The fairies gaze at her in fascinated astonishment.*]

DUSKY:

She is not glad.

TWINKLE:

She is not free.

SKYPEEP:

She is not sweet.

SPECKLE:

Her smile has had
A kitchen smut.

WEEWEE:

Her feet don't dance.

DUSKY:

The ignorance
Of mortal feet!

SKYPEEP:

Nor yet her eyes.
She does not see
The butterflies.

TWINKLE:

When has she played?

SPECKLE:

Her tippet's frayed.

WEEWEE:

It's 'fraid o' what?

JACK-A-DREAMS [*In argument with his wife*]:

When you see them, you'll believe.

ZAN-IN-A-TIPPET:

Fiddle-faddle! Men deceive.

JACK:

But I talked with two this noon.

ZAN:

So you say, you great gossoon.

JACK:

They were uglier than apes.

[*The Leprecauns shake their fists at him.*]

ZAN:

You're no beauty, Jackanapes.

[The fairies laugh and skip.]

JACK:

Here they sit upon this stump.

*[Springing toward the Leprecauns, who
crouch motionless.]*

ZAN:

Would they did, to catch a thump.

*[She strikes the rough brown wood,
missing the elves by a few inches.]*

JACK *[Rubbing his eyes in perplexity, after
staring at the stump]:*

Sure, I thought I saw them there.

ZAN:

You see nothing everywhere. *[The
fairies laugh.]*

JACK:

I hear fairy laughter now.

ZAN [*With impatient contempt*]:

O mew-mew! quack-quack! bow-wow!

JACK:

If you should meet a fairy, Zan,—

ZAN:

I'd pickle him in an old tin can.

[*The fairies rush upon her and pinch
her feet.*]

JACK:

Why are you making such a face?

ZAN:

There must be nettles in this place.

JACK:

I tell you I talked with elves to-day.

ZAN:

Likely story! Where are they?

JACK [*Puzzled and rueful*]:

I can't see them any more.

ZAN:

No, nor ever did before.

JACK:

But I'll find the crock of gold.

ZAN:

I'll believe when I behold.

JACK:

I marked the very spot hereby.

ZAN:

Spoiling your best Sunday tie.

JACK [*Gazing about the meadow in dismay*]:

Oh, but Zan—but Zan—but Zan—

ZAN:

What's the matter with the man?

JACK:

All the shrubs are marked like ours.

ZAN:

Bairns at play have tagged the flowers.

JACK:

Where's my shovel? where's my sack?

ZAN:

You'd lose the coat from off your back.

JACK:

Oh, the elves! the cheating elves!

ZAN:

It is we who cheat ourselves.

JACK:

Fairy gold still flies from men.

ZAN:

Earn an honest penny then.

[Jack stands wringing his hands and crying, while Zan-in-a-Tippet boxes his ears and keeps on cuffing him until he kneels for mercy. Neither

*of them sees or hears the fairies who
dance in a merry ring about them,
while the Leprecauns, the Cobbler in
his court-jacket, indulge in a rheu-
matic waltz upon the stump.]*

FAIRIES:

We are the hid-folk,
Seen-but-by-faith folk,
Glimmering wraith-folk,
Beauty's surprise;
Not-to-be-chid folk,
Not-to-be-proved folk,
Only the loved folk
Of childhood the wise.

Poems of Christmas

CHRISTMAS ISLAND

FRINGED with coral, floored with lava,
Three-score leagues to south of Java,
So is Christmas Island charted
By geographers blind-hearted,
—Just a dot, by their dull notion,
On the burning Indian Ocean;
Merely a refreshment station
For the birds in long migration;
Its pomegranates, custard-apples
That the dancing sunshine dapples,
Cocoanuts with milky hollows
Only feast wing-weary swallows,
Or the tropic fowl there dwelling.
Don't believe a word they're telling.
Christmas Island, though it seem land,
Is a floating bit of dreamland

Gone adrift from childhood, planted
By the winds with seeds enchanted,
Seeds of candied plum and cherry:
Here the Christmas Saints make merry.

Even saints must have vacation;
So they chose from all creation,
As a change from iceberg castles
Hung with snow in loops and tassels,
Christmas Island for a summer
Residence. The earliest comer
Is our own saint, none diviner,
Santa Claus. His ocean-liner
Is a sleigh that's scudding fast.
Mistletoe climbs up the mast,
And the sail, so full of caper,
Is of tissue wrapping-paper.
As he steers, he hums a carol,
But instead of fur apparel

Smudged with soot, he's spick and spandy
In white linen, dear old dandy,
With a Borealis sash on,
And a palmleaf hat in fashion
Wreathed about with holly berry.
Welcome, Santa! Rest you merry!

Next, his chubby legs bestriding
Such a Yule-log, who comes riding
Overseas, the feast to dish up,
But—aha!—the boys' own bishop,
Good St. Nicholas! and listen!
Out of Denmark old Jule-nissen,
Kindly goblin, bent, rheumatic,
In the milk-bowl set up attic
For his Christmas cheer, comes bobbing
Through the waves. He'll be hob-nobbing
With Knecht Clobes, Dutchman true,
Sailing in a wooden shoe.

When the sunset gold enamels
All the sea, three cloudy camels
Bear the Kings with stately paces,
Taking islands for oases,
While a star-boat brings Kriss Kringle.
Singing *Noël* as they mingle,
Drinking toasts in sunshine sherry,
How the Christmas Saints make merry!

While a gray contralto pigeon
Coos that loving is religion,
How they laugh and how they rollick,
How they fill the isle with frolic.
Up the Christmas Trees they clamber,
Lighting candles rose and amber,
Till the sudden moonbeams glisten.
Then all kneel but old Jule-nissen,
Who, a heathen elf stiff-jointed,
Doffs his nightcap, red and pointed;
For within the moon's pale luster

They behold bright figures cluster;
Their adoring eyes look on a
Silver-throned serene Madonna,
With the Christ-Child, rosy sweeting,
Smiling to their loyal greeting.
Would that on this Holy Night
We might share such blissful sight,
—We might find a fairy ferry
To that isle where saints make merry!

SANTA CLAUS' RIDDLE

OF all the happy and holy times
That fill the steeples with merry chimes
And warm our hearts in the coldest climes,
'Twas Christmas eve, as I live by rhymes.
One by one had the drowsy oaks
Wrapt about them their snow-flake cloaks,
And snugly fastened, with diamond pins,
Fleecy nightcaps beneath their chins.

The stars had kissed the hills good-night,
But lingered yet, with a taper light,
Till the chattering lips of the little streams
Were sealed with frost for their winter dreams.

And the silver moonbeams softly fell
On cots as white as the lily-bell,
Where the nested children sweetly slept,
While watch above them their angels kept.

Eyes of gray and of hazel hue,
Roguish black eyes and bonny blue,
All with their satin curtains drawn,
Peeped not once till the shining dawn.

But still through the silent eventide
Brown eyes twain were opened wide,
Where, bolt upright in his pillows, sate
A wise little wean called Curly Pate.

Not yet the lore of schools and books
Had troubled the peace of his childish looks,

But through the valleys of Fairyland
He had walked with Wisdom, hand in hand.

On midsummer eves he would hear, perchance,
The shrill, sweet pipes of the elfin dance,
And their dewy prints in the dawning trace
On tremulous carpets of cobweb lace.

He had caught the clink of the hammers fine,
Where the goblins delve in their darksome
mine,

In green cocked hats of a queer design,
With crystal tears in their ruby eyne.

He had seen where the golden basket swings
At the tip of the rainbow's dazzling wings,
Full of the silver spoons that fall
Into the mouths of babies small.

He had met Jack Frost in tippet and furs,
Pricking his thumbs on the chestnut burrs,
And this learned laddie could tell, no doubt,
Why nuts fall down and friends fall out.

And now, while the dusky night waxed late,
All nid-nodding sat Curly Pate,
Scaring the dreams, whose wings of gauze
Would veil his vision from Santa Claus.

And ever he raised, by a resolute frown,
The heavy lids that came stealing down
To rest their silken fringes brown
On the rosiest cheek in Baby-Town.

Till at last, at last,—so the legend tells,—
He heard the tinkle of silver bells;
Tinkle! tinkle! a jocund tune
Between the snow and the sinking moon.

Oh, then, how the heart of our hero beat!
How it throbbed in time to the music sweet,
While gaily rung on the frosted roofs
The frolicsome tramp of reindeer hoofs!

And down the chimney by swift degrees
Came worsted stockings and velvet knees,

Till from furry cap unto booted feet
Dear Saint Nicholas stood complete.

Blessings upon him! and how he shook
His plump little sides with a mirthful look,
As he crammed, his bright, blue eyes a-twinkle,
The bairnie's sock in its every wrinkle.

May he live forever—the blithe old soul,
With cheeks so ruddy and shape so droll,
Throned on a Yule-log, crowned with holly,
The king of kindness, the friend of folly!

His task was done, and he brushed the snow
From his crispy beard, as he turned to go;
From his crispy beard and his tresses hoar,
As he tiptoed over the moonlight floor.

But the sparkling flakes to delicious crumbs
Of frosted cakes and to sugar-plums
Changed as they fell, whereat near by
A bubble of laughter proved the spy.

Back from the chimney flashed the Saint,
And stamped his feet in a rage so quaint
That from scores of pockets the dolls in glee
Popped up their curious heads to see.

"Oho!" in a terrible voice he spake,
"By the Mistletoe Bough! a boy awake!
Now freeze my whiskers! but in my pack
I'll stow him away for a jumping-jack.

"Wise as an owlet? Quick! the proof!
My reindeer stamp on the snowy roof.
So read my riddle, if sage you be,
Or up the chimney you go with me.

"Name me the tree of the deepest roots,
Whose boughs are laden with sweetest fruits,
In bleakest weather which blooms aright,
And buds and bears in a single night."

Did Curly Pate tremble? Never a whit.
Below the curls was the mother-wit;

And well I ween that his two eyes brown
Spied the dimple beneath the frown.

So shaking shyly, with childish grace,
The ringlets soft from his winsome face,
He peeped through his lashes and answered
true,

As I trow that a brave little man should do:

"Please thy Saintship, no eyes have seen
Thy wondrous orchards of evergreen;
But where is the wean who doth not long
The whole year through for thy harvest song?

"The *Christmas Tree* hath struck deep roots
In human hearts: its wintry fruits
Are sweet with love, and the bairns believe
It buddeth and beareth on Holy Eve."

A stir in the chimney, a crackle of frost,
A tinkle of bells on the midnight lost;

And in mirth and music the riddling guest
Had smiled and vanished, as saints know best.

But low on his pillow the laddie dear
Sank and slumbered, till chanticleer,
Crowing apace, bade children wake
To bless the dawn for the Christ-child's sake.

GOODY SANTA CLAUS

SANTA, must I tease in vain, Dear? Let me
go and hold the reindeer,
While you clamber down the chimneys.
Don't look savage as a Turk!
Why should you have all the glory of the
joyous Christmas story,
And poor little Goody Santa Claus have
nothing but the work?

It would be so very cozy, you and I, all round
and rosy,

Looking like two loving snowballs in our
fuzzy Arctic furs,
Tucked in warm and snug together, whisking
through the winter weather
Where the tinkle of the sleigh-bells is the
only sound that stirs.

You just sit here and grow chubby off the
goodies in my cubby
From December to December, till your
white beard sweeps your knees;
For you must allow, my Goodman, that
you're but a lazy woodman
And rely on me to foster all our fruitful
Christmas trees.

While your Saintship waxes holy, year by
year, and roly-poly,
Blessed by all the lads and lassies in the
limits of the land,

While your toes at home you're toasting, then
 poor Goody must go posting
Out to plant and prune and garner, where
 our fir-tree forests stand.

Oh! but when the toil is sorest how I love our
 fir-tree forest,
Heart of light and heart of beauty in the
 Northland cold and dim,
All with gifts and candles laden to delight a
 boy or maiden,
And its dark-green branches ever murmur-
 ing the Christmas hymn!

Yet ask young Jack Frost, our neighbor, who
 but Goody has the labor,
Feeding roots with milk and honey that the
 bonbons may be sweet!
Who but Goody knows the reason why the
 playthings bloom in season

And the ripened toys and trinkets rattle
gaily to her feet!

From the time the dollies budded, wiry-boned
and saw-dust blooded,
With their waxen eyelids winking when the
wind the tree-tops plied,
Have I rested for a minute, until now your
pack has in it
All the bright, abundant harvest of the
merry Christmastide?

Santa, wouldn't it be pleasant to surprise me
with a present?
And this ride behind the reindeer is the
boon your Goody begs;
Think how hard my extra work is, tending the
Thanksgiving turkeys
And our flocks of rainbow chickens—those
that lay the Easter eggs.

Home to womankind is suited? Nonsense,
Goodman! Let our fruited
Orchards answer for the value of a woman
out-of-doors.

Why then bid me chase the thunder, while the
roof you're safely under,
All to fashion fire-crackers with the light-
ning in their cores?

See! I've fetched my snow-flake bonnet,
with the sunrise ribbons on it;
I've not worn it since we fled from Fairyland
our wedding day;
How we sped through iceberg porches with the
Northern Lights for torches!
You were young and slender, Santa, and we
had this very sleigh.

Jump in quick then? That's my bonny. Hey
down derry ! Nonny nonny!

While I tie your fur cap closer, I will kiss
your ruddy chin.

I'm so pleased I fall to singing, just as sleigh-
bells take to ringing!

Are the cloud-spun lap-robcs ready? Tirra-
lirra! Tuck me in.

Off across the starlight Norland, where no
plant adorns the moorland

Save the ruby-berried holly and the frolic
mistletoe!

Oh, but this is Christmas revel! Off across
the frosted level

Where the reindeers' hoofs strike sparkles
from the crispy, crackling snow!

There's the Man i' the Moon before us,
bound to lead the Christmas chorus

With the music of the sky-waves rippling
round his silver shell—

Glimmering boat that leans and tarries with
the weight of dreams she carries
To the cots of happy children. Gentle
sailor, steer her well!

Now we pass through dusky portals to the
drowsy land of mortals;
Snow-enfolded, silent cities stretch about
us dim and far.
Oh! how sound the world is sleeping, mid-
night watch no shepherd keeping,
Though an angel-face shines gladly down
from every golden star.

Here's a roof. I'll hold the reindeer. I sup-
pose this weather-vane, Dear,
Some one set here just on purpose for our
team to fasten to.
There's its gilded cock,—the gaby!—wants to
crow and tell the baby

We are come. Be careful, Santa! Don't
get smothered in the flue.

Back so soon? No chimney-swallow dives
but where his mate can follow.

Bend your cold ear, Sweetheart Santa,
down to catch my whisper faint:
Would it be so very shocking if your Goody
filled a stocking
Just for once? Oh, dear! Forgive me.
Frowns do not become a Saint.

I will peep in at the skylights, where the moon
sheds tender twilights
Equally down silken chambers and down
attics bare and bleak.

Let me shower with hailstone candies these
two dreaming boys—the dandies
In their frilled and fluted nighties, rosy
cheek to rosy cheek!

What! No gift for this poor garret? Take a
sunset sash and wear it

O'er the rags, my pale-faced lassie, till thy
father smiles again.

He's a poet, but—oh, cruel! he has neither
light nor fuel.

Here's a fallen star to write by, and a music-
box of rain.

So our sprightly reindeer clamber, with their
fairy sleigh of amber,

On from roof to roof, the woven shades of
night about us drawn.

On from roof to roof we twinkle, all the silver
bells a-tinkle,

Till blooms in yonder blessed East the rose
of Christmas dawn.

Now the pack is fairly rifled, and poor Santa's
well-nigh stifled;

Yet you would not let your Goody fill a
single baby-sock;

Yes, I know the task takes brain, Dear. I can
only hold the reindeer,

And to see me climb down chimney—it
would give your nerves a shock.

Wait! There's yet a tiny fellow, smiling
lips and curls so yellow

You would think a truant sunbeam played
in them all night. He spins

Giant tops, and flies kites higher than the gold
cathedral spire

In his dreams—the orphan bairnie, trustful
little Tatterkins.

Santa, don't pass by the urchin! Shake the
pack, and deeply search in

All your pockets. There is always one toy
more. I told you so.

Up again? Why, what's the trouble? On
your eyelash winks the bubble
Mortals call a tear, I fancy. *Holes in stock-
ing, heel and toe?*

Goodman, though your speech is crusty now
and then, there's nothing rusty
In your heart. A child's least sorrow makes
your wet eyes glisten, too;
But I'll mend that sock so neatly it shall hold
your gifts completely.
Take the reins and let me show you what a
woman's wit can do.

Puff! I'm up again, my Deary, flushed a bit
and somewhat weary,
With my wedding snow-flake bonnet worse
for many a sooty knock;
But be glad you let me wheedle, since, an
icicle for needle,

Threaded with the last pale moonbeam, I
have darned the laddie's sock.

Then I tucked a paint-box in it ('twas no easy
task to win it

From the Artist of the Autumn Leaves) and
frost-fruits white and sweet,

With the toys your pocket misses—oh! and
kisses upon kisses

To cherish safe from evil paths the mother-
less small feet.

Chirrup! chirrup! There's a patter of soft
footsteps and a clatter

Of child voices. Speed it, reindeer, up the
sparkling Arctic Hill!

Merry Christmas, little people! Joy-bells
ring in every steeple,

And Goody's gladdest of the glad. I've
had my own sweet will.

SANTA'S STOCKING

DAME SNOW has been knitting all day
With needles of crystal and pearl
To make a big, beautiful stocking
For Santa, her merriest son;
And now in some wonderful way
She has hung it, by twist and by twirl,
On the tip of the moon, and sits rocking,
Old mother, her day's work done.

How long and how empty it flaps,
Like a new, white cloud in the sky!
The stars gleam above it for candles;
But who is to fill it and trim?
Dame Snow in her rocking-chair naps.
When Santa comes home by and by,
Will he find—O scandal of scandals!—
No Christmas at all for him?

Dear Saint of the reindeer sleigh,
At his tink-a-link-tinkle-a-link,

The evergreens blossom with tapers;
'Tis Christmas by all the clocks;
And wherever he calls, they say,
The most polished andirons wink,
The sulkiest chimney capers,
And Baby kicks off its socks.

His pack is bursting with toys;
The dollies cling round his neck;
And sleds come slithering after
As he takes the roofs at a run.
Blithe lover of girls and boys,
Bonbons he pours by the peck;
Holidays, revels and laughter,
Feasting and frolic and fun.

Who would dream that his kind heart aches
—Heart shaped like a candied pear,
Sweet heart of our housetop rover—
For the homes where no carols resound,

For the little child that wakes
To a hearth all cold and bare,
For Santa, his white world over,
Finds Christmas doesn't go round!

Dame Snow has been knitting all day
With needles of crystal and pearl
To make a big, beautiful stocking
For Santa, her busiest son;
And now in some wonderful way
She has hung it, by twist and by twirl,
On the tip of the moon, and sits rocking,
Old mother, her day's work done.

Let us bring the dear Saint from our
store
Fair gifts wrapped softly in love;
Let all gentle children come flocking,
Glad children whose Christmas is sure;

Let us bring him more treasures and more,
While the star-candles glisten above,
For whatever we put in his stocking,
Santa Claus gives to the poor.

LOLITA'S BETHLEHEM

SEVEN shining sunsets
 Lead to Holy Night,
And Lolita's Bethlehem
 Grows with her delight.
Lola, Lolita,
 Little Spanish lass!
Blithely for Lolita
 The seven sunsets pass.

Under Moorish arches
 Trips a timid tread.
First we give the Holy Child
 With the haloed head,

And demure Lolita
 Makes her small salaam,
Cherishing the Baby
 In a roseleaf palm.

Blue and gold the sunset
 On our second eve;
A Madonna blue and gold
 Lifted hands receive;
And Lolita scampers,
 With a shout of joy,
To carry Mary Mother
 “To her little boy.”

Frolic of light footsteps
 Dancing to the door;
Who is waiting on a staff,
 Figure bowed and hoar?
Merrily Lolita,
 Black eyes mischievous,

Kisses old Saint Joseph
Before she kisses us.

It is not Lolita,
Sweetheart, who will scorn
For her Holy Family
Cow with crumpled horn.
Lola, Lolita,
Hugs it close and vows
That it is her darling,
The caramel of cows.

Seven shining sunsets,
One by one they pass.
From a pearly twilight comes
Humble Brother Ass.
Lovingly Lolita
Teaches him his part:
"Kneel beside St. Joseph,
Donkey of my heart."

Next a china shepherd
 With two curly sheep,
But Lolita hushes them
 Ere she lets them peep
At the Christ-Child, shedding
 Tenderness and awe,
Where He slumbers softly
 On a wisp of straw.

Last of seven sunsets!
 Hardly can we wait
For Christmas Eve to enter in
 By that gleaming gate;
While Lolita's angel,
 Balanced on a star,
Acrobat with lilac wings,
 Plays a pink guitar.

Blissfully Lolita,
 Careful not to hurt,

Gathers all the images

In her little skirt.

Lola! Lolita!

To bed she carries them,

For to-night all childhood

Sleeps in Bethlehem.

Poems of Sunshine

SUNSHINE

THE sun rode high, and the dear green Earth
Was stirred in her motherly heart with mirth;
And to every blossom and dancing spray
She gave the grace of a holiday.

And oh! what laughter the silver breeze
Shook from the leaves of the poplar trees!
How the streamlet, with all her sweet blue
eyes,

Smiled on the sport of the dragon-flies!

The flashing humming-bird deeply dipped
In the yellow tulip; the blithe bee sipped
From the purple, delicate cups of wine
That he found on the morning-glory vine.

The smallest fly and the least red thorn
Were fair with summer and fresh with morn,

When who should chance on the sunlit place,
But a little girl with a sulky face?

Through all the music and merriment
She came, to trouble the world's content;
And wheresoever her feet did pass,
A shadow fell on the gleaming grass.

She leaned out over the rivulet,
And all at once it began to fret,
And wrinkled its waves to a frown like that
She carried under her broad-brimmed hat.

A carpet shaming the wealth of earls,
Softer than satin and bright with pearls,
She crushed, nor heeded the spider's grief,
As he wiped his eyes on a clover-leaf.

'Twas Saturday, after the count of men;
But the simple folk of meadow and glen,
Clear of the calendar's restless freak,
Keep seven Sabbaths in every week.

And so it happened that through the dells
A soft chime floated of flower-bells,
And the child at the roots of a tall, white
 birch

Came on the worshipers all in church.

The brook was an organ, passing sweet;
On the swaying bough was the choir seat;
And the blue, blue heaven bent close to heed
The murmured words of the woodland creed.

The Reverend Buttercup leaned across
A velvet pulpit of greenest moss,
And preached a sermon, in still small voice,
Whose text was ever, "Rejoice! rejoice!"

"Behold," quoth he, "how our Father's care
Hath wrought the meadow exceeding fair;
And my jocund heart doth overrun
With fragrant summer and fervid sun.

"Behold," quoth he, "though I barely fold
In my tiny chalice a drop of gold,

How I yet reflect and, reflecting, praise
The sun on whom I have set my gaze.

"Bless God," he cried, "with a sweet perfume,
With tuneful ripple and tinted bloom,
With dance of grasses, and faces bright,
Bless God, the Giver of all delight!"

So the preacher spake, and at every line
Nodded the listening columbine;
And the lady's slipper resolved that day
To walk henceforth in the upward way.

The downy owlet forgot to blink;
The robin heard, and the bobolink,
And the wild-brier rose, who blushed to think
Of her thorny ways till her buds turned pink.

A tremulous tear, like a dewdrop, wet
The downcast eye of the violet;
And her prayer of trustful penitence
Was wafted to heaven for frankincense.

And the little lass of the pouting lip
Smoothed, with a rosy finger-tip,
From her tangled forehead the dreary frown,
And hid her face in her ringlets brown.

But she peeped from between the wind-blown
locks

At the clink of the contribution-box;
And when the squirrel came down the aisle,
In his acorn-cup she dropped a smile.

Then the little lass of the laughing lip
They welcomed into their fellowship;
And many a daisy and clover-stem
Kissed her foot and her garment's hem.

And the story saith that forever more
On her soft brown tresses the maiden wore
A crown of sunshine this side of heaven,
And she kept her Sabbath day all the
seven.

A SONG OF RICHES

WHAT will you give to a barefoot lass,
Morning with breath like wine?
*Wade, bare feet! In my wide morass
Starry marigolds shine.*

Alms, sweet Noon, for a barefoot lass,
With her laughing looks aglow!
*Run, bare feet! In my fragrant grass
Golden buttercups blow.*

Gift, a gift for a barefoot lass,
O twilight hour of dreams !
*Rest, bare feet, by my lake of glass,
Where the mirrored sunset gleams.*

Homeward the weary merchants pass,
With the gold bedimmed by care.
Little they wis that the barefoot lass
Is the only millionaire.

SONG OF THE SUNSHINE CLUB

"WHAT shall I make this morning?"

The Sunshine Angel said.

"Canary birds and merry words

And a yellow crocus bed."

Chorus:

The Sunshine Angel, dear to God,

Goes singing on his way,

Touching the dawn with a daffodil rod

To make a happy day.

The wings of the Sunshine Angel

They brushed the willow-trees

And goldfinch flocks and weather-cocks

And grumble-bumblebees.

Chorus: The Sunshine Angel, etc.

"What shall I make this morning?"

The Sunshine Angel said.

"A marigold swamp, a butterfly romp,

And the curls on a baby's head."

Chorus: The Sunshine Angel, etc.

The smile of the Sunshine Angel
Went into a barberry shrub,
A meadowlark's throat with its golden note,
And the hearts of the Sunshine Club.

Chorus:

The Sunshine Angel, dear to God,
Goes singing on his way,
Touching the dawn with a daffodil rod
To make a happy day.

Poems of Vacation

VACATION

I HAVE shut my books and hidden my slate
And tossed my satchel across the gate.
My school is out for a summer of rest,
And now for the schoolroom I love the best!

My schoolroom lies on the meadow wide,
Where under the clover the sunbeams hide,
Where the long vines cling to the mossy
 bars
And the daisies twinkle like fallen stars;

Where clusters of buttercups gild the scene
Like showers of gold-dust thrown over the
 green,
And the wind's flying footsteps are traced, as
 they pass,
By the dance of the sorrel and dip of the grass.

My lessons are written in clouds and trees,
And no one whispers, except the breeze,
That sometimes blows, from a secret place,
A stray, sweet blossom against my face.

My school-bell rings in the rippling stream,
That hides itself, like a schoolboy's dream,
Under the shadow and out of sight,
But laughing still for its own delight.

My schoolmates there are the birds and bees,
And the saucy squirrel, more dull than these,
For he only learns, in all the weeks,
How many chestnuts will fill his cheeks.

My teacher is patient, and never yet
A lesson of hers did I once forget,
For wonderful lore do her lips impart,
And all her lessons are learned by heart.

Oh, come! oh, come! or we shall be late,
And Autumn will fasten the golden gate.

Of all the schoolrooms in east or west,
The school of Nature I love the best.

WIDE AWAKE AND FAST ASLEEP

(One Side of the Question)

A BLITHE Summer Day came out of the east,
And a rare little lad was he.
His lips were red from a strawberry feast,
And his eyes were blue as the sea.
His yellow hair was blown by the breeze,
Like grass in a windy place.
He had torn his jacket in climbing trees,
And he laughed all over his face.

He danced in the elm, on the tip-top spray
Where the nest of the oriole swings,
Till the birdies had winked the sleep away
All under their gleaming wings.

He shook the stems of the lilies tall,
While they nodded in soft surprise
And rubbed with their fingers white and
small
The dreams from their golden eyes.

The daisy hastened to wash her face
In a drop of the crystal dew,
And each green leaf of the woodland lace
The kiss of the sunshine knew.
The squirrel chattered and combed his tail
That curls up over his spine,
And the pinkest clover turned almost pale
When the village clock struck nine.

For two little boys in two little beds
Lay dozing the morning long,
Though the sun shone in on their tangled
heads
And the birds had ended their song.

“O dear! O dear!” sighed the Summer Day,
“What lazy small boys I see!
I wish—I wish they would wake and play
With a bright little Day like me.”

THE SUN OUT OF TEMPER

(The Other Side of the Question)

“OH! I say and declare that it’s really not
fair

For the Day-Star to call me so soon!”

Cried the Sun, very red, as he jumped out of
bed

And made up a face at the Moon.

So he climbed the blue skies with his thumbs
in his eyes

And his hair tumbled over his head,

And he gave a great yawn in the face of the
Dawn,

Which was very bad manners, she said.

Then the Sun was ashamed to hear himself
blamed,

And being ashamed made him cross.

So he withered the wheat with his arrows of
heat

And trampled the dew from the moss;

And he fumed and he fussed till the toad in the
dust

Did envy the frog in the pool

And swore he would doat on a pond-lily
boat

Much more than a mushroom stool.

The flowers were faint, the trees made
complaint,

And the little leaves teased for a drink,

But the Sun only stared, for all that he
cared

Was to glower with never a wink;

Till it happened one day that the World went
away,

The World and his Wife to remain
A week and no more with their Aunt by the
shore.

Said the Sun: "It is time for a rain."

Said the Sun: "I repent, and my anger is
spent.

I must cry seven days at the least."

So he tied up his head in a shabby white shred

That he tore from a cloud in the east.

From fog thick as cloth he stirred him a broth

To save him a pain in the side,

And then he sat down in a dismal gray gown,

And oh, for the cry that he cried!

Sobbed the penitent Sun: "I have only begun.

I shall shed many tears for the loss

Of my temper. I'll shiver and cry like a river,

I'm so sorry I ever was cross.

But my patience was tried and the cause I'll
confide,

That early birds all may take warning,
For in summer 'tis true my hot temper is due
To my rising too soon in the morning."

SOMEBODY KNOWS

*Hey, for the glint of the wild-brier rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest!
And hey for the haunt that Somebody knows,
When the noontide sun is sorest!*

Soft through the treetops the south wind goes,
With footsteps learned of the clouds, suppose;
And playing at sentry the rose-bay glows
Amid the ferns of the forest.

Over their sylvan porticoes
Squirrels gossip with sleepy crows—
The only birds that can talk in prose—
Above the ferns of the forest.

The sweet-bay, crushed for a couch, bestows
Drowsy fragrance, and virtue flows
From the shadowy pines, till eyelids close
Amid the ferns of the forest.

Drop your budget of childish woes
(The wind, while you dream, will be off with
those),
And come where never a thorn tree grows
Amid the ferns of the forest.

*Hey, for the glint of the wild-brier rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest!
And hey for the haunt that Somebody knows,
When the noontide sun is sorest!*

THE RIVULET

MORNING in roseate lines
Glimmers beyond the pines.

Blithely the blackbird sings,
Night on his dusky wings.
But see! as he flirts them so,
'Tis the sunrise glints below,
And the joy of breaking day
Rings in his roundelay.
But bolder, merrier yet,
The song of the rivulet.

*Mine is the path to the sea.
Bird and blossom and bee
Wish me well as I pass.
Rock and tangle of grass
Fret my waves as I run.
Still in shadow and sun
Onward I flow to be
One with the silver sea.*

Noon in the azure sky.
Even the twinkling fly

Faints on the violet's lip.
Low where the alders dip
Over the brook and lean
To ruffle the ripples' sheen,
A bluebird dreamily croons
Snatches of sleepy tunes.
But softer, drowsier yet,
The song of the rivulet.

Mine is the path to the sea, etc.

Sunset flames in the west.
Flowers are folded to rest.
The hermit thrushes invoke
God's peace on the woodland folk,
While high from the ancient oak,
Each in his scarlet cloak,
The tanagers, sparks of fire,
Vary the vesper choir.

But sweeter, holier yet,
The song of the rivulet.

Mine is the path to the sea, etc.

FAIR WEATHER

THE ship had rounded Sandy Hook
With the blue-eyed peep of day;
But while full many a joyous look
Was straining up the bay,
On the steerage deck together
A boy and a woman stood,
Who shrank from the golden weather
In wildered, waif-like mood.

She sighed: "This sun is sair to bide,
These skies are na the same
As those aboon the Firth o' Clyde
An' the hills of our island hame."

And the flash of the seagull's feather
Was one with the creaming foam
Through her tears for the soft, gray
weather
And the brooding mists of home.

The child laid cheek upon her hand:
"Hoots, mither! dinna greet.
Had I ae shell frae Arran sand,
An' a burnie, ripplin' sweet,
An' bracken an' purple heather
An' a bittie o' blossomin' thorn,
I wad mak' ye bonny Scotch weather
To brichten your heart the morn."

That nestling cheek upon her hand,
It soothed her tears to smiles.
She leaned out toward the stranger land
As to her native isles,

And said: "'Twa hearts thegether,
Tho' skies be strange abuve,
Can mak' their ain gude weather,
A' out o' tender luve."

NUTTING SONG

COME hither, come hither, O laddies and
lassies!

The daisies have folded their frills,
But the purple-eyed asters still peep from the
grasses,

And the golden-rod shines on the hills.
Though the tulips have faded, the maples are
glowing

With many a marvelous hue,
And deep in the woods where the brown leaves
are blowing,

The chestnuts are waiting for you.

We've dreamed of your coming, at even and
 matin;

We've dreamed of your coming, at noon;
In our snug little cradles all cushioned with
 satin,

While the wind sang our lullaby tune.
While the wind rocked our cradles, we longed
 for the showers

And were glad of the sunshine and dew
That ripened our hearts for the blithe autumn
 hours,

That sweetened our kernels for you.

Oh, hither! come hither! for keen the stars
 glistened

Last night, and the woodlands were
 crossed

By him for whose step the wych-hazel bush
 listened

And the barberries waited,—Jack Frost.

He rifled our caskets, the prickle-set caskets,
And earthward the jewels he threw.
The squirrels are filling their queer little
baskets—
Oh, come! we are waiting for you.

PLUCKING THE GOOSE

ROBIN beneath the barberry bush had turned
his bill aside
From the ripest ruby cluster to watch Gray
Squirrel hide
An acorn in a garner under fallen leaves that
spoke
In rustling whispers each to each of lonely
Mother Oak;

When that Old Woman in the skies whose
hair and robes float loose
Selected from her cloudy flock the very
whitest goose,

And plucked it with such diligence that bits
 of flapping down
Folded in a feather-quilt the country and the
 town.

We children hardly stirred that night at
 mamma's candle-kiss,
Because in dreamland, far away, we heard the
 white goose hiss.
"Wind and frost!" our elders said, when
 morning came to pass,
But 'twas the goose whose angry claws had
 scratched the window-glass.

A WINTER DAY

THE sun shines bright, but stoutly still the
 bitter north winds blow,
And thin brown leaves in elfin dance go
 whirling on the snow.

The ruffled bluejay silently peers from a
naked tree,
But gaily rings the gallant note of little
chickadee.

The grown-ups hug the fireplace and shiver
when they cast
Looks over shoulder at the pines that strain
against the blast.
The postman, stamping through the drifts,
meets no one on the road
But two small boys who bend and pull,
rejoicing in their load.

For Baby, tucked all tight and warm within a
grocery box,
Claps mites of scarlet-mittened hands to see
the junco flocks
Rise with a flirt of feathery white before her
wagonette.

To her blue eyes this winter world is best of
playrooms yet.

OUT TO PLAY

Wonderful world,
Bounded by low stone walls;
Snowdrops curled
Tight in bonnets and shawls;
Stump for a throne
Royally rubied and pearled,
Moss-overgrown;
Beautiful world!

Great sycamore,
Spotted with lichen rust,
Branches hoar
Shaken by rainy gust,
Giant that stands
Grieving for sins of yore,

Wringing his hands;
Poor sycamore!

Scamper of leaves
After the fairy folk,
Birchbark sleeves,
Fringes of frosted cloak,
Tempting us on
Races the wild wind weaves,
To find them gone,
Fairies and leaves!

Under the tread,
Oh, how the colors push!
Rose-twigs red,
Tangles of burning bush,
Rag-carpet gay
With saffron and lilac shred,
Rainbows at play
Under the tread!

Crinkle of ice
Over the meadow stream
In a trice
Melted by sunny gleam;
Freeing brown reeds
Caught in that crystal vise;
Briers and weeds
Locked in the ice!

Ha, how they dance,
Withered and twisted and thin!
One more chance
Theirs for a madcap spin!
Nothing so old
That the sun looks at it askance!
Tatters and gold,
Whirling in dance!

Ware the witch!
Ware the bramblebush hag!

Or she'll twitch,
Twitch you into her bag,
Squeeze you and cram
Into a lump of rich
Blackberry jam!
Ware the witch!

Watch for the three,
Bluebird, robin and—hark!
Kon-quer-reel!
There he flies like a spark,
Lord of the swamp,
Red-shouldered blackbird—see!
Off on a romp,
First of the three!

Oh, isn't March
Merriest month of the year!
Blithe and arch,
Shy and saucy and dear!

Hide-and-seek
Playing in alder and larch;
Pinching the cheek,
Rogue of a March!

THROUGH THE GOLDS AND THE
GREENS OF SPRING

THROUGH the golds and the greens of spring,
The whites and the pinks of May,
Chasing a bluebird's wing,
Off on a holiday.

How lucky the gypsies are
With holidays all in a row,
And never a lamp but a star,
And ever a road to go!

Dear oak with a tasseled cap,
Would you hold it over me while
I take three winks of a nap,
For I've traveled almost a mile?

Life is as sweet as a rose,
And blithe as a bobolink's song,
And don't you perhaps suppose
That I'll never again do wrong?

Poems of Flowers

A TULIP TEA-PARTY

TULIPS, twenty-lips
In the glistening grass,
Elfin ladies at their tea,
Gossiping of bird and bee
In the listening grass.

*Don't tell !don't tell!
But my shining cup
Was filled with gold by Neighbor Sun,
And they say before the Spring is done
He will drink it up.*

Tulips, twenty-lips
'Neath the bending oak
Straining all his buds to hear
Tulip voices fine and clear,
Old, befriending oak.

Don't tell! don't tell!
Why my cup is red.
Hush! let's whisper. It was Sir
Flaming Scarlet-Tanager,
And a plume he shed.

Tulips, twenty-lips
In the swaying wind
Ever bowing, tiptoeing
With a note-book under wing,
That betraying wind!

Don't tell! don't tell!
Touch my petal—so!
This my teacup, seafoam-white,
Lady Moon filled up last night
With a dream of snow.

Tulips, twenty-lips,
While the birds fly over,
Chattering and taking tea,

Never guessing that to me
Tulip words fly over!

Don't tell Bluebell!
Don't tell Bobolink!
But the Baby, toddling by,
Kissed my cup, and that is why
I'm so sweet and pink.

DAFFYDOWNDILLIES

DAFFYDOWNDILLIES are not lilies,
Lilies angel-white,
But they catch the stars that the thunder
jars
From the coronet of night.

Daffydowndillies are not lilies,
Easter lilies tall,
But their hearts have won the smile of the
sun,
And butterflies come to call.

Daffydowndillies are not lilies.
Would that I were you!
But since I'm not, I will love my lot,
And make it lovely, too.

WITCHCRAFT

THERE's a witchcraft in the May,
Bluebirds say,
For 'tis then the pansies wise
Give the garden a surprise
By changing into ranging butterflies.

Who has seen them, wing on wing,
Fluttering,
Purple, orange, lilac, brown,
On the road to Rainbow Town,
Where the petal-people love to settle down?

Should you meet them, do not snap
Off your cap

With a prisoner in view;
Leave them to the air and dew,
Else the garden will not lightly pardon you.

THE RAINBOW PATH

THE rain it rained a weary while,
But when the clouds took flight,
The setting sun flashed back a smile.
(Good-night, dear sun, good-night!)
And from the far horizon's breast
An arching rainbow sprang to rest
Its hither tip on mountain crest,
A bridge of colors seven.

Rainbow,

I know

Thou art the path to Heaven.

The flowers that laughed by April rills
And made the summer bright
Have vanished from the autumn hills.
(Good-night, dear sun, good-night!)

For blossom-spirits fresh and fair
Are wafted by the gentle air
To bloom above in beauty rare
And weave the colors seven.

Rainbow,

I know

Thou art the path to Heaven.

And when along that gleaming way
We fare in sandals white
Beyond the golden gates of day,
(Good-night, dear sun, good-night!)
We'll love the blossoms as we go
The more because on earth below
They lit the fields, ere called to glow
Within the colors seven.

Rainbow,

I know

Thou art the path to Heaven.

SANDALPHON'S ROSEBUDS

IN the herald hush of even,
Spent with ecstasy of praising,
From the starry gate of heaven
Angels twain were earthward gazing,
And their speech, each to each,
Was a wordless music-flow;
And the love-light of their eyes
Thrilled the sunset-colored skies
To a clearer glow.

Hush! they cease their soft conferring,
Rapt in looks of gladsome greeting,
For the lower air is stirring
Under wings of ample beating;
And behold! plumed with gold
Mounts Sandalphon, he who bears
Mystic blossoms to the throne,
Blossoms that on earth are known
As the breath of prayers.

Swift they scan with earnest glances

All his sheaf from twilight hour,

Lilies white of saintly trances,

Sorrow's purple passion-flower;

But they smile softly while

Close against his heart they see

Dewy rosebuds, gathered where

Children lift the voice of prayer

At a mother's knee;

Prayers of childish faith, confiding

In the Gentle Shepherd's keeping,

Asking for His daily guiding,

For His watch above their sleeping,

Rosebud prayers the angel bears

Tenderly past stars and suns

Unto Him who loveth these

Shy, enfolded fragrances,

Lord of little ones.

Poems of Fur and Feathers

GRANDSIRE SQUIRREL GRAY

GRANDSIRE Squirrel Gray
Is a millionaire of nuts;
And when the snow begins to blow,
His castle door he shuts.
Behind that door, they say,
Lord of the hollow tree,
He dwells in the dark, a patriarch
With all his family,—

*Shadow-Tail and Leafy-Veil,
Bead-Eyes, Cracker, Hush,
Treetop-Leaper, Treasure-Keeper,
Crunch-in-a-Crotch and Plush.*

The oak is mother-of-pearl,
Frosted on trunk and limb,
An icy trapeze for the chickadees,
But what is that to him?

So his tail has room to curl
Up over his furry back,
And his hickories last till winter's past,
What may a squirrel lack?

But the seeds are crisp and sweet
In the cones on the snowy pine;
There are berries red as a woodpecker's head
At a club where he likes to dine;
So forth on scampery feet
Goes Grandsire Squirrel Gray,
And his family wonder what forest plunder
Will come home in his cheeks to-day,—

*For Scud and Run-the-Rail,
Wary, Bask-in-the-Sun,
Chir-Chir-Chir and Bite-a-Burr,
Pelt-you-with-Shells-for-Fun.*

Into his hole of holes
He plunges down pell-mell

With a speed that vouches for empty pouches,
And Grandam scolds him well;
But over the acorn bowls
What glorious table-talk
Of skurry-escape from the swooping shape
Of a fierce, red-shouldered hawk!

Of the dash to the nearest stump,
Of the ambushed foe beneath,
Of the breathless rush through the underbrush
In front of a fox's teeth!
And how the small hearts thump,
And glitters each round black eye,
While the baffled fox tries all the locks,
And the hawk screams up the sky,

Scaring Tease-a-Snail,

Spry and Rustle and Puck,

Drink-the-Dew and Whisk and Whew,

Live-by-his-Wits and Luck.

When the terrible wings of the storm
Buffet the shuddering trees,
On cushion of moss with his legs across,
Grandsire takes his ease.

In the midst of his family, warm
As a chestnut in its burr,
What does he care for the stinging air,
Or the burden that breaks the fir?

Though hungry woodpeckers drum
On his oak, and nuthatches play
At acrobat in the boughs, what's that
To dozy Grandsire Gray?

The chatterers all are dumb,
For under a leafy spread
Each squirrelkin is at rest within
A pine-needle trundle-bed,—

Twinkle and Give-you-Hail,
Sit-on-a-Fence and Flirt,
Gnaw-the-Rind and Race-with-the-Wind,
Peep-through-the-Green and Pert.

When the Angel of Winter Sleep
Through the white wood passes slow,
Whispering the dream of spring
And tucking close the snow,
She will smile to find in this deep
Tree-hollow a cuddle of fur,
Every squirrel at rest with little paws
 pressed
On a heart that trusts in her.

LITTLE SHADOWTAIL

WHERE the ancient oak droops over
Dewy tufts of grass and clover,
 Through its blowing leafy sprays
 Sifting light in careless rays,
Like a spendthrift dropping gold
From his loose, regardless hold,
 Let me pause and bid all hail
 Unto little Shadowtail.

Whist! just where the kingbird dips,
Spreading wide the proud white tips
Of its fanlike tail,—just there,
Framed within his doorway fair,
Buttercups before it strown,
Cloth of gold, and overgrown
With those curly fronds for veil,
Sitteth little Shadowtail.

Would no humbler mansion suit,
But within the gnarly root
Of this hoar, historic tree,
Thou must gossip with the bee,
Peering through the screening ferns
At thy neighbors' wee concerns,
And upon the stranger rail,
Shrewish little Shadowtail?

Once beneath this storied oak
Eliot his message spoke,

And the Red Men, clustered round,
Knew this earth for holy ground,
Wondering at the words divine.
Was some curious sire of thine
Mocking then the preacher pale
From thy threshold, Shadowtail?

He the sermon deemed, methinks,
Dull beside the bobolinks.

'Tis an old, old quarrel, that.
Could I take thy squirrel-chat,
And thine ears receive my wit,
Wisely would we argue it;
Yet shall mighty Truth prevail
Without me or Shadowtail.

PETERKIN

THE crown of cats, who trod as if
Shod in a moccasin.

He tested his milk with a delicate sniff,
He leapt on mice like a hippogriff,
And no wonder at all that Pendleton
Thought a shadow had crossed the sun
When beneath his hand lay cold and stiff
His Peterkin.

With folded paws poor pussy lay,
Mute as a violin
On which the fiddler forgets to play,
And his little master to grief gave way.
"If my other friends should die," wept he,
"I could bear it, mamma, for I should see
Them all again in heaven some day.
—But Peterkin!"

Who knows? whatever on earth is sweet
A sweeter life may win
In the Paradise garden, incomplete
Without the frolic of creature feet.
Where our lost birds trill, and our lost dogs wait

To welcome us in at the dear home gate,
Please God, where the loved and the loving meet,
Is Peterkin.

ROBIN'S SECRET

'Tis the blithest, bonniest weather for a bird
to flirt a feather,
For a bird to trill and warble, all his wee
red breast a-swell.
I've a secret. You may listen till your blue
eyes dance and glisten,
Little maiden, but I'll never, never, never,
never tell.
You'll find no more wary piper, till the straw-
berries wax riper
In December than in June—aha! all up and
down the dell,
Where my nest is set, for certain, with a pink
and snowy curtain,

East or west, but which I'll never, never,
never, never tell.

You may prick me with a thistle, if you ever
hear me whistle

How my brooding mate, whose weariness
my carols sweet dispel,

All between the clouds and clover, apple-
blossoms drooping over,

Twitters low that I must never, never,
never, never tell.

Oh, I swear no closer fellow stains his bill in
cherries mellow.

Tra la la! and tirra lirra! I'm the jaun-
tiest sentinel,

Perched beside my jewel-casket, where lie
hidden—don't you ask it,

For of those three eggs I'll never, never,
never, never tell.

Chirp! chirp! chirp! alack! for pity! Who
hath marred my merry ditty?

Who hath stirred the scented petals, peeping
in where robins dwell?

Oh, my mate! May Heaven defend her!

Little maidens' hearts are tender,

And I never, never, never, never, never
meant to tell.

ON A RAMBLE

COME! come! come!

Follow, lad, with me

On behind the stirring drum

Of Captain Bumblebee.

Hush! hush! hush!

Finger on the lip!

Between the ferns a tiny thrush

Goes running—skip, skip, skip.

Look! look! look!

Did ever laddie see
Softer nest in greener nook
With birdies one, two, three?

Nay! nay! nay!

Curly-headed thief!
If we steal the brood away,
Who will heal the grief?

Hear! hear! hear

The poor brown mother's cries!
Now blessings on the gentle tear
That dims my laddie's eyes!

Come! come! come!

Not one wee heart shall ache
In any humblest woodland home
For mine or laddie's sake.

A MUSIC-LESSON

Squeakity-squeak in the poplar trees.
Such a comical little wheeze!
But Father Thrush from mellow throat
Flutes again his forest-note
That hushes every breeze.

To that melody of melodies
An echo comes like a feathered sneeze.
How can the Hermit Thrushes dote
On such a beak!

But Mother Thrush lets no one tease.
She puts her Thrushlet at his ease
With a taste of the plumpest fly afloat.
Then the little breast begins to bloat,
And he pipes, as proudly as you please,
Squeakity-squeak.

THE BIRD HOTEL

*From fall to spring
'Tis a little thing
To spread the birds good cheer
On a window tray,
Where the heart may play
At summer all the year.*

Nuts, if you please,
For the chickadees,
—Never mind about napkins and cruet—
But they'll doff you, perhaps,
Their cozy black caps
For a lump of delectable suet.

An elegant guest
In white dinner-vest
May put them to flutter and flight,
For though Nuthatch says *dank*,
Intended for *thank*,
No chickadee calls him polite.

A superior throne
Is a marrow-bone
For a woodpecker potentate,
Since seldom can kings
Eat the cushions and things
That embellish their chairs of state.

The bluejay will seize
On fragments of cheese
Like a story-book pirate on gold,
But nothing comes ill
To his catholic bill,
Though his blessing sounds more like a scold.

A salad of seed
Tree-sparrow may lead
To your table, when stripped is his thicket,
Or fox-sparrow fine
Whom your dainties incline
To forfeit his Florida ticket.

Junco trustfully comes
For a feast of crumbs,
Our snow-bird in storm-coat drest,
All white below,
For they say, who know,
God painted her on her nest.

And if courtesy sends
Them odds and ends
From your own plate for variety,
The bows and bends
Of your feathery friends
Would grace the best society.

*To spring from fall
Keep open hall,
And the birds will teach each care
That winter brings
The way of wings,
Escaping up the air.*

Poems of Little People

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BABY BETH

ROGUSH brown-eyed glances,

That's our Baby Beth.

Gypsy-shy advances,

That's our Baby Beth.

Quaintest little fancies

Ever borne on breath,

Frolic-footed dances,

That's our Baby Beth.

Sunshine-tinted tresses,

That's our Baby Beth.

Dainty bits of dresses,

That's our Baby Beth.

Fearless little guesses

Into life and death,

Roseleaf-lipped caresses,

That's our Baby Beth.

BABY'S BAGGAGE

THE train is ready. Come away

And let your labor cease.

Mama has packed three trunks to-day,

Papa, his new valise.

But as for Little Golden-Locks,

She only packed a chatterbox.

The baggage-master touched a cap

With shining letters decked,

And so to guard from all mishap,

The bag and trunks he checked;

But never stayed for Golden-Locks,

Nor counted in the chatterbox.

A new official sauntered soon

In slippers down the cars,

Who softly hummed a drowsy tune.

His badge was wrought in stars.

'Twas Sleep who smiled on Golden-Locks,

And checked at last the chatterbox.

AT RECESS

LITTLE voices all out of chime,
 A sudden quarrel that mars the play.
 "Now," quoth the teacher, "now's our time
 To practise that Golden Rule we say."

But the tiniest wean in all the school
 Lays a rueful face on the teacher's knee.
 "Isn't there any Silver Rule?
 That Golden Rule's too hard for me."

THE MEASURING ROD

OVER the clover the fairies their gossamer
 carpets had spread,
 A-sprinkle with twinkle of diamonds from
 their dancing slippers shed,
 When two little lads from the city went
 scampering down to the lake,
 Astonished to find how early the green world
 comes awake.

The finches were inches of glory, the tanagers
burning arrows,
And mellow the yellow-throat's whistle; the
boys took them all for sparrows,
But breathed the joy of the morning, and
raced with bounds and springs,
As if their heels, like Mercury's, were finished
off with wings.

On the blue of the lake the lilies, their white
dreams hardly done,
Were cups of light. "What a jolly sight!"
cried Hal, the jurist's son,
But the heir of the multi-millionaire shook a
head so wise and blond:
"They'd look nicer put in vases than scattered
on a pond."

Then Johnny the bonny added, with a calculating air:

"I say, I wonder how far it is to those lilies
over there."

And a hidden turtle nudged her mate, while,
grave as an eight-day clock,

Hal answered in his father's tone: "Not
more than half a block."

THE BARBERRY BABY

DID you ever, ever chance to see

A barberry muffled in snow?

So red was the face turned up to me

From a little white hood I know.

So glowing red was each round cheek!

So red were the pouting lips!

Would the words be frozen they tried to
speak?—

"My sled! It slips. It slips."

I have heard of a land so cold, so cold,
That words would stand on the air
Spelled out in ice, but I'm not so bold
As to say I ever was there.

But these rode warm in a wrathful wail,
For not all the wind that nips
Could sting this Mite like having to fail:
"My sled! It slips. It slips."

You could never, never guess it true,
Though you guessed with a wit and a will,
What the Barberry Baby was trying to do:
She was trying to coast up hill.

HOME FROM SCHOOL

HOME from the very first day of school
Came Wee-Wee, aged five,
And already she'd learned enough to befool
The wisest parents alive.

"Now I understand everythings,
Everythings only two."

They prepared to smile at her questionings,
As grown-ups commonly do.

"Where'd God find the stuff to begin the world,
And how did He get Himself started?"

The father his fork on his finger twirled;
The mother's mute lips were parted.

That their Baby, whose coo was but just made
chatter,

Should pose all humankind

By asking what was the source of matter
And the origin of mind!

REBECCA AND ABIGAIL

When the Clans of the Open Hand convene

And our valors are rehearsed,

Remember the year eighteen-fourteen

And our proud September first.

*When ye write the roll of our heroes down,
Oh, be not the deed ignored
Of two little heroines, bonny and brown,
Whose wit was sharp as a sword.*

Careless she sat in the lighthouse door,
Lass of the laughing lip,
When there hove in sight off the Scituate
shore
The sails of a British ship.
Rebecca Bates was the merriest maid
Between Cape Cod and Cape Ann,
But her quick breath sobbed, for, old fears
allayed,
The post had never a man.

Over her shoulder Abigail peered
With the soft brown eyes of their race,
And the sisters watched as the frigate neared
And anchored against the place

Where guards had been stationed till yester'en,

But now had no garrison more
Than the keeper's wife with her gentle mien,
And the girls in the lighthouse door.

The work-worn mother, all unaware
Of the blow about to fall,
Dozed in her faded rocking-chair,
While the kitten teased the ball
That had rolled from her knitting, and not
until

Two barges in stealthy guise
Put off from the ship, had the girls a will
To waken those weary eyes.

Then her dream was pierced by the shrilling fife
And crushed by the rolling drum.
She swayed to her feet: "O Lord of Life,
Is the hour of bloodshed come?"

White she sprang to the empty door
And saw how the redcoats, stayed
By that martial note, had poised the oar,
Mistrusting an ambuscade.

A sullen gun from the ship warned back
The boats, and with hurried stroke
They traversed again that foaming track
To the shelter of British oak,
While *Yankee Doodle* rang out the fife,
And the drum was calling to arms
As if mustering men for desperate strife
From a hundred rebel farms.

Murmured the goodwife: "God be praised!"
And next: "But how shall I feed
This patriot army Thou hast raised
To succor us in our need?"
Then around the corner, as large as life,
She saw that army come,—

Laughing Rebecca who waved the fife,
And Abigail with the drum.

LITTLE TOM À BECKET

OUR Christian world was less twelve centuries
old

When little Tom à Becket proudly sat in
His mother's lap and, worth his weight in
gold,

Prattled to her in Norman-French and
Latin.

His weight in gold? "Nay, dearer yet," she
said,

Kissing the rosy face, "my precious sonny
Is worth his weight in good white wheaten
bread,

Pasties and cheese and saffron cakes and
honey."

The merchant father stroked a forkèd beard
And stooped long rows of figures to examine,
But sweet Dame Becket mused on cheeks
 endeared
To other mothers,—cheeks that paled for
 famine.

So every birthday would she weigh her lad
 Against a great brass scale with food o'er-
 flowing,
While the hungry folk of London crowded
 glad
About the gates and blessed the boy for
 growing.

And Tom à Becket, in his school-gown quaint,
 Would give the loaves, with greeting shy
 and merry,
Nor ever dreamed he was to be a saint
 And have a glorious shrine in Canterbury.

Nonsense Verses



HUDSON'S CAT

"This night our cat ranne crying from one side of the ship to the other, looking overboard, which made us to wonder; but we saw nothing."—*Juet's Journal*.

WHAT did you see, O pussy-cat-mew,
Pet of the *Half-Moon's* turbulent crew?
Who taught them mew-tiny? Wasn't it you?

Juet kept journal of storm and fog
And the mermaid that set them all agog,
But what has become of the cat-a-log?

Henry Hudson, the master sage,
Writ large his name on history's page,
But you, you too, were a purr-sonage.

Shall the tale slight you, whose tail was
a-quiver

As you and Hudson sailed up the river
Made only his by Time the giver?

Why did you take to adventuring,
Puss-illanamous fireside thing?
What was the cargo you hoped to bring?

Did you dream of multitudinous mice
Running about the Isles of Spice
In a paradoxical Paradise?

Were you not homesick where monsters swam,
Dolorous dolphin and clamorous clam,
For your sunny stoop in Amsterdam?

Months at sea, while the billows roared,
And the Milky Way not a cupful poured;
No wonder Tabby looked over-bored.

You had your feelin's, as felines go,
Poor little puss. What scared you :o?
O stupid sailors that didn't know!

Was it a dogfish struck the spark
From your sea-green eyes with the quaint
 remark
That you were sailing upon a bark?

Millions of happy pussies fall
Into oblivion; still you call
From the top of your ancient cater-wall,

Call on the centuries to concur
In praise of Tabby the Mariner,
Who discovered the Catskills, named for her.

DON'T YOU SEA?

THE day was hotter than words can tell,
—So hot the jelly-fish wouldn't jell.

The halibut went all to butter,
And the cat-fish had only force to utter

A faint sea-mew,—ay, though some have
doubted,

The carp he carped and the horn-pout pouted.

The sardonic sardine had his sly heart's wish
When the angel-fish fought with the Paradise-
fish.

'Twas a sight gave the blue-fish the blues to see,
But the seal concealed a wicked glee.

The day it went from bad to worse
Till the pickerel picked the purse-crab's purse,
And that crab felt crabbeder yet, no doubt,
Because the oyster wouldn't shell out.

The sculpin would sculp, but hadn't a model,
And the cod-fish begged for something to
coddle,

But to both the dolphin refused its doll,
Till the whale was obliged to whale them all.

FIRST NIGHT IN THE COUNTRY

“You call this a lake?” asked the sociable
dog,

Easing his watch by a chat with the frog.

“I call it my bathing-tub.”

And the frog, a-squat on a moist cool stone,

Replied politely in soothing tone

With the monosyllable: “Blub.”

“You call this a lake?” rattled Kingfisher.

“Pish!

Can’t you see it is only my kettle of fish?”

But he fell asleep in his shrub

Before the frog, with an accent bland

And the manner of those who understand,

Had finished responding: “Blub.”

"You call this a lake? Look out if you do.
WHIP-POOR-WILL!" rang themidnightthrough.

"*Now* what do you call it, bub?"

The challenge cracked like a sudden whip,
But unconcerned by that censorship
The frog suggested: "Blub."

"You call this a lake?" scoffed the Lady Moon.
"'Tis my silver mirror, you green buffoon."

She intended this for a snub,
But the frog only rolled his goggle-eyes
Up toward her balcony in the skies
And gallantly answered: "Blub."

I have slept through bells from a rocking spire,
Through engine whistles and cries of *Fire*,
Through toot and rub-a-dub-dub,
But I could not sleep through the dialogue
Of the folk of the dark with Wiseman Frog,
And his imperturbable "Blub."

THE VOYAGE OF THE LILY-PAD

'Twas a freckled laddie his friends call Paddy
Made a boat of a lily-pad
By tying a string to the flat green thing
In a wise little way he had.

A bee was chosen to be the boatswain,
And we named him Captain Kidd,
For he shone with gold like a pirate bold
Nor told where his hoard was hid.

He sharpened his dagger with glorious swagger
(He was after the swag, you know)
And our blood ran cold while he fiercely trolled
A *rumbe-rumbelow*.

Our craft was a ripper, and such a skipper
Ought to have made it hum,
But that foolish ship would double and dip
Till the equilibrium

Of bumptious Bumble was lost in a tumble
Indecorous on the deck,
While Paddy laughed so, he let the string go,
And the Lily-Pad went to wreck.

But safe and chipper out skipped the skipper
To the sign of the Clover Ball,
Where after a glass of honey, "Alas!"
He buzzed, "That a bee should fall

To a naughty career in a nautical sphere!
But the fault it wasn't in me,
For unless I forget my alphabet,
A B must go to C."

OUT OF FASHION

THE buds are putting off their furs
And coming out in silk,
Pinks and pearls and lavenders,
Laces white as milk.

But here is one who will—oh!

Whatever gossips say,
Commit the peccadillo
Of having her own way.

'Tis Pussy cuddles in her furs,
Though skies are bright and blue;
Basking in the sun, she purrs
As happy catkins do.

For she is one who still, oh!
Though all the wood demurs,
Wayward Pussy Willow,
Keeps cozy in her furs.

THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS

SAID the Old Man of the Mountains
To his white-capped goblin-wife:
“Have you fed the glacier fountains,
Dame Trouble-of-my-Life?

Here is a horn, a Silverhorn,
A Matterhorn of snow,
Go feed the glacier fountains"—
And he laughed to see her go.

There he sits, the lazy fellow,
Whose pipe puffs out the mist,
The King of the Gnomes, a yellow,
Hunch-shouldered humorist,
Chuckling to watch his old dame there,
In her hood and mantle dim,
Keeping the Alps in good repair,
Doing his work for him.

Poems of Fairies

SLUMBER FAIRIES

HUSH, my little one! Hush! Lie down.

Mamma will sing,—

Sing of a boy in a wee white gown,

Sing of a king with a golden crown,

A crown of curls on a sweet, small head,

And a throne as high as a trundle-bed.

Dear little king!

Hush, my baby! a song I know

Softer than all,—

A song as soft as the falling snow,

And I will sing it so light and low,

Baby must listen and lie as still

As the snowflakes lie on the quiet hill,

Where they fall.

Does baby know, when the day grows late,

Chilly and dim,

The slumber fairies, who stand and wait
Out in the lane and beyond the gate,
Pass over the lawn and open the door
And steal across the nursery floor,
Looking for him?

Such tiny fairies, with slippers white
Over their feet.

Their cloaks are gray as the early night,
But their caps are lit with a silver light,
As if a moonbeam were caught, perhaps,
And cut up small into fairy caps
Dainty and neat.

Up the side of the trundle-bed
Softly they go,
And over the pillow with gentle tread
They come to the golden baby-head.
Under his lashes he tries to peep,
But before he knows, he is fast asleep.
Isn't it so?

For they bind the baby with fairy charms

Wondrous to tell.

They loose the clasp of the dimpled arms,

And smooth his forehead with soft, small
palms,

And draw their cloaks o'er his drowsy ears,

Till a fairy music is all he hears,

Pleasing him well.

They shade his eyes with a little dream.

Where did it grow?

It grew by the side of the fairy stream,

Where baby wandereth now, I deem,

With the slumber-fairies to guide his feet.

Good-night, dear laddie! Your rest be sweet!

Mamma must go.

FAIRY'S LULLABY

IN lily cup I'll nest me,

From fairy dance to rest me,

For the silver moon
Dips low, and soon
Would the goblins swart molest me.

But never a gnome will mock me,
Nor peering toad-face shock me,
While the wind-elf blithe
Stands on tiptoe lithe
By the lily's stem to rock me;

And the star-sprites lean above me,
For all the star-sprites love me;
In circle fair
Each holds in air
His small gold torch above me.

Come, soft-winged Sleep, and kiss me,
For the dream-land fairies miss me,
Till thy sweet, cool lips
Part the folded tips
Of my lily-couch to kiss me.

But when thy spells unbind me
The sunbeams shall not find me,
 And my dreamy nest
 Be only guessed
By the fragrance left behind me.

FAIRY RIP VAN WINKLE

HIS acorn cradle with fern and moss
 Elf mamma had covered over,
And then had forgotten the path across
 The blossoming field of clover.
For she was the wildest of all wee things,
And loved to dance in the moonlight
 rings,
Or steal her a ride on butterfly wings,—
 A genuine gypsy rover!
 Streams flow,
 Buds blow,

Stars peep out and twinkle.

Still deep

Thy sleep,

Fairy Rip van Winkle!

But he woke one day and with drowsy
eyes

Smiled into a dewy bubble

On his cradle edge; then in swift surprise

Cried out in a voice of trouble:

"O mamma, mamma, I don't look right,

My cobweb nightie has grown so tight;

My buttercup curls are daisy white;

And over my eyebrows double

What's this

Cross-criss

Funny little wrinkle?"

Long gazed,

Amazed,

Fairy Rip van Winkle.

For his nap in the acorn had lasted till

A new oak forest had sprouted,
And the elves had vanished from mead and rill,

By the schoolbook army routed.
And the ancient baby, whose eyes could see
Never a toadstool spread for tea,
Nor lullaby-nurse of a honey-bee,
Put up his lip and pouted.

But no

Tiptoe

Lily bells went tinkle.

Bye-bye!

Don't cry,

Fairy Rip van Winkle!

THE TROLL

HE was only an ugly Troll,

And an ugly Troll was he;

His eyes were saucers, and his guffaw, sirs,
Would scare you into the sea.

*Oh, droll to be a Troll,
With green pine-needle hair,
And hoards of jewel stacked up like fuel
In the hill of Don't-Know-Where.*

He was only a stupid Troll,
As all the Troll-folk be,
Sailing a-straddle, his nose for a paddle,
On a solid gold settee.

*Oh, droll to be a Troll,
And never so much as mind
Gravitation or botheration
Or the witch that rides the wind.*

But he was a merry Troll,
With a harp against his knee,
And when he played it, all things obeyed it,
A-capering for glee.

*Oh, droll to be a Troll,
And sail and sail and sail
Over your troubles like dancing bubbles
To your home in a fairy-tale.*

BABY HAZEL'S VOYAGE

KING NOD, King Nod, the drowsy god, is
such an idle fellow,
He sleeps away the livelong day, while yet
the sun is yellow;
But when the sinking sun is red and robin's
song is failing,
'Tis time for him to rub his dim old eyes and
go a-sailing.

His moonshine boat is soon afloat; a glow-
worm serves for pilot;
On silver oars they graze the shores of many
a starry islet;

In silver sails they catch the winds, and down
the cloudy billows
Full fast they ride before the tide to Baby
Hazel's pillows.

“Ahoy, sweet maid! Now art afraid, with
Old King Nod for skipper,
To sail the deep and drink sweet sleep from
yonder golden dipper?
Aboard, aboard, my dainty lass! aboard my
silver vessel!
And thou shalt see, in dream-land tree, the
little dream-birds nestle.”

She bowed—ah me!—her rosy knee, and
kissed the old king's scepter.
Unto his breast the child he pressed and down
the darkness swept her.
Oh, frail the skiff, the silver skiff! O Hazel
Eyes, take warning!

On Sunrise Reef 'twill come to grief. Good-
night, good-night—good-morning !

BONNY'S BIRTHDAY

BONNY, my Bonny, sleeps well to-night.
(Dear is sleep when the day is done.)
Soon shall the eastern skies be bright,
And a birthday dawn with the dawning sun.

How many years has my Bonny seen?
How many years since she strayed from
Heaven ?
Seven times since have the woods grown green,
And the snows have fallen seasons seven.

Lies the lassie in artless grace,
Soft hair curling in golden rings,
Fair the light on her sleeping face
As shed from an angel's shielding wings.

Bonny smiles in her dream's delight,
 (Blithe are dreams when the heart is pure),
Till the rosy dimples come to sight,
 Lost so long in the cheek demure.

What do the dreaming eyes behold?
 Lend us your spectacles, Old King Nod.
Just one peep through the rims of gold.
 Bless my buttons! But this is odd.

Is it a shaft of the yellow moon,
 Slanting in at the window-glass,
Or a sheeny road, where the twinkling shoon
 Of gossamer-skirted fairies pass?

Martial music salutes the ear.
 (Sweet is the beat of elfin drums),
And seven small knights come riding here
 Out of the Land of Sugarplums.

Bonny laughs in her childish dream.

Each little knight on a candy steed
In haughty helm of chocolate cream
O'er the moonbeam rides with speed.

Ho, Little Knights in frosted mail,

Luck to the cinnamon swords you wield!
Never may hostile lance prevail
Against the pride of peppermint shield!

Fast they ride down the moonlight ray,

(Smooth is the road that leads to love),
Wee knights seven, gallant and gay,
With a popcorn standard borne above.

With melting hearts on their quest they ride,

Drawing the rein at the ringlets sunny.
"Ah!" cries one, "for so sweet a bride
Would I shed my knightly blood like honey."

Yet they turn their candy steeds and sigh.

Was ever a dream so queer as this?

And each little knight, as he waves good-bye,

Drops on the pillow a sugar kiss.

Bonny wakes with the blushing east,

(Glad is waking when sleep was kind),

But never a knight to her birthday feast

From Sugarplum Land has stayed behind.

Yet far though the little sweethearts bide

In Caramel Castle and sigh their fill,

On Bonny's pillow at morningtide

The candy kisses are lying still,

As the wee knights left them yestere'en,

A dainty record in kisses seven

Of the years that my Bonny's eyes have seen,

Happy years since she strayed from Heaven.

THE WISHING-CAP

A LITTLE maid stole to a moonlight knoll,
In the fairy ring to tread;
But the dancing fays had gone their ways
And a gnome was there instead.

“Brown gnome, please lend me your wishing-
cap.”

He snatched off his small, green hood
And tossed it to her. “Many thanks, kind
sir;
You are certainly very good.

“Seven times one! And what shall I
wish?”

The gnome sat down on a thistle,
With his peaked red shoon pointed up to the
moon,
And practiced an elfin whistle.

"I wish and I wish and I wish and I wish
That you were as rich as I,
Little brown gnome, for I've pennies at home,
And I don't know what to buy.

"I wish and I wish and I wish and I wish
My heart were a wild-rose brier,
Where the bell-voiced veery when day grows
weary,
Leads off the vesper choir.

"I wish my heart were a forest brook
A-ripple with sunshiny laughter,
Where to quench their thirst shy deer come
first
And the pattering rabbits after.

"I wish my heart were a golden star
That guides over creamy foam
The shimmering sails through whistling gales
To the harbor lights of home.

"I wish my heart were a blade of grass,
Where Katydids all a-row
Tilt in the sun, singing high deeds done
Of Katydids long ago.

"I wish my heart were a rosy cloud
On the sunset edge of even,
That tenderly bears the children's prayers
Through the open doors of Heaven.

"I wish my heart were as large, as large,
As large as the dome-like skies,
There's so much to love, from God above
To the little gossamer flies."

Then the lassie gave back the small green
hood
And curtsied to the gnome,
And the lilies sweet caressed her feet,
As the glow-worms lit her home.

The gnome dived under the hard, gray rocks
To the land where the gnome-folk dwell;
A land of gold and jewels untold,
Hard by the gates of hell.

But while he sate in his wishing-cap
On the throne in his diamond castle,
Squeaked his wee brown wife, in a voice like a
fife:

“Why! there’s a tear on the tassel!”

And never a pearl from the Indian seas,
Nor emerald cold and clear,
Shed such a light through those caves of night
As the little gnome-king’s tear.

THE LITTLE KNIGHT IN GREEN

WHAT fragrant-footed comer
Is stepping o’er my head?
Behold my Queen, the Summer,
Who deems her warriors dead!

Now rise, ye knights of many fights,
From out your sleep profound!
Make sharp your spears, my gallant peers,
And prick the frozen ground!

Before the White Host harm her,
We'll hurry to her aid.
We'll don our elfin armor,
And every tiny blade
Shall bear atop a dewy drop,
The lifeblood of the Frost,
Till from their King the order ring:
"Fall back! the day is lost!"

Now shame to knighthood, brothers!
Must Summer plead in vain?
And shall I wait till others
My crown of sunshine gain?
Alone this day I'll dare the fray,
Alone the victory win.

In me my Queen shall find, I ween,
A sturdy paladin.

To battle, ho! King Winter
Hath rushed on me apace.
My fragile weapons splinter
Beneath his icy mace.
I stagger back. I yield—alack!
I fall. My senses pass.
Woe worth the chance for doughtiest lance
Of all the House of Grass!

Last hope my heart gives over.
But hark! a shout of cheer!
Don Daisy and Count Clover,
Sir Buttercup are here.
Behold! behold! with shield of gold
Prince Dandelion comes.
Lord Bumblebee beats valiantly
His rolling battle-drums.

My brothers quit their slumbers
And lead the van of war.
Before our swelling numbers
The foes are driven far.
The day's our own; but overthrown,
A little knight in green,
I kiss her feet and deem it sweet
To perish for my Queen.

OUR FAMILY CREST

'Tis I must tell my story quick as ever a
tongue can spin,
Because you childer grow so tall that, if I
don't begin,
The brown heads and the yellow heads will all
have shot too high
To see between the daisy-stems what met the
laughing eye

Of our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Great -
Grand-mama.

Here's Willie asks if mermaids were ever
caught and canned,

And Dorothy's geography is searched for
fairyland,

And, faith! the lass Elizabeth can talk of
myths as glib

As if—bad manners to her!—she mistrusted
of a fib

Her Great-Great-Great -Great-Great-Great
Great - Great - Great - Great - Grand -
mama.

Now whist! and let me tell you how long and
long ago,

In the blessed isle of Erin, where songs and
stories blow

On all the winds, and tangle with the rushes
of the thatch,
Or drop in dew that sweetens the smallest
praty-patch,
Lived our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Great -
Grand-mama.

A jewel of a tub she had, the color of Queen's
weather,
And the bits of duds she soused in it went
white as seagull feather,
And when she spread them on the furze, the
only gold that grew
About her clay-walled cabin, the sun peeped
out to view
Our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Grand-
mama.

Oh, then she dried her shapely hands upon her
scarlet skirt,
And emptied out the shining suds and gave
the broom a flirt
Across that grand mud floor of hers and took a
drop of tea
Or taste of oatmeal stirabout, so well-to-do
was she,
Our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Grand -
mama.

But heart alive! one Monday when, as many
a time before,
She was emptying her tilted tub from her
elegant front door,
Out from under the doorstone popped a tiny
man in green
And bowed as low as he ever bowed in the
court of the fairy queen

To our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Great -
Grand-mama.

He bowed so low that his wee green cap it
brushed his wee green shoon,
And nary a bell on his wee green suit but
tinkled a dancing tune,
And when he had finished his wee green bow,
as easy as you please
He spoke in a voice as soft as the hum of the
summer bumble-bees,
To our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - Great -
Grand-mama.

“Now don’t ye go frettin’ yersel’,” he said,
“for it’s long sorry I’d be
To cast a cloud on the bluest eyes betwixt the
bog and the sea;

But my little green house is under this stone,
and your suds—'tis the wife that
cares—

They throuble our little green carpet, ma'am,
and all our little green chairs."

O our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Grandmama!

"Wirra, wirra!"—she curtsied twice to that
decent fairyman—

"Och, it's a heart-scald for to hear, but if
your worship can

Be overlookin' the past, bedad, 'tis mesel'
that forivermore

Will be emptyin' out me ould blue tub—plaze
the saints!—at me bit back door,"

Said our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Grandmama.

Now when she mentioned the holy saints,
and a tactless thing was that,
The little green fairy faded out, all but his
plumy hat,
Which took itself off to her most polite, and
since that queer event
We empty our washtubs at the back in proof
of high descent
From our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - G r e a t -
Grandmama.

Her thatch of rushes belike it leaked, but her
cabin was proud as any,
There on the borders of fairyland, where joy
is bought for a penny,
And ever she set a sup of the cream for her
little green neighbors, who
Would dance at night in her turf-fire light
till the heart went dancing too

In our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - G r e a t -
Grandmama.

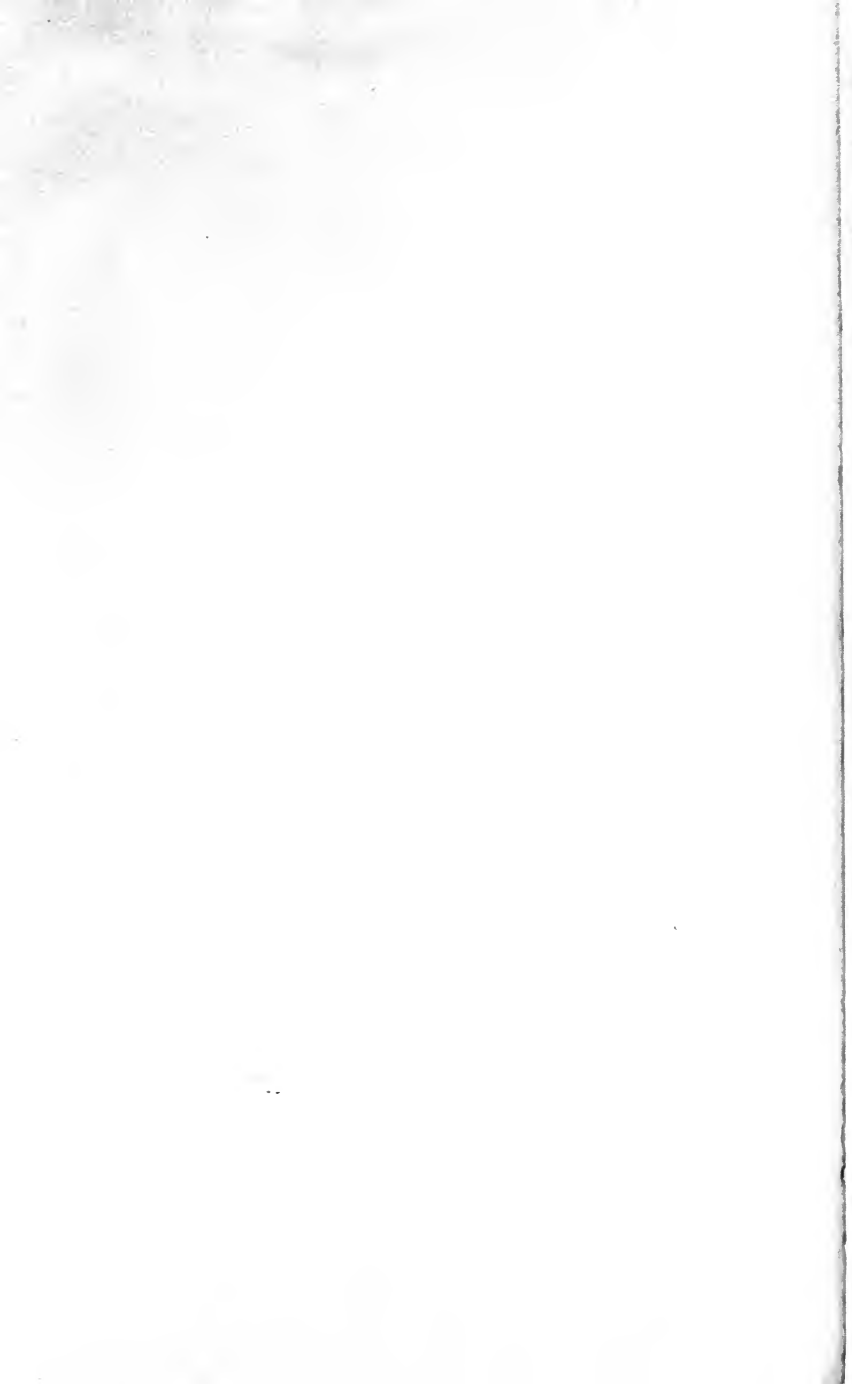
So I rise to propose for our family crest a wash-
tub, azure, crowned

With a fairy, vert; and since our race em-
braces, the world around,

All who empty their tubs at their own back
doors and gladden their toil with
dreams,

Remember that he who scorns the least of that
kinship disesteems

Our Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-
Great - Great - Great - Great - G r a n d -
mama.



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